

STARS AND STRIPES[®]

**British band Keane
working toward
trans-Atlantic fame**

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Lead singer Tom Chaplin



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training for next
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brackets,
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TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 2005

50¢

Blueprint for Bagram

No longer just a city of tents, U.S. air base in Afghanistan transformed by plan for permanent structures Page 4



MICHAEL ABRAMS/Stars and Stripes

The foundations are set for the first brick-and-mortar barracks building on Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, to replace the B-huts now being used. Slowly, but steadily, a slew of construction projects at Bagram are providing troops with better housing and improved work areas as well as a handful of new shops for eating and entertainment.

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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

States

Judge's slain relatives: Rumbling and threatening letters from the man believed to be the killer of Judge Joan Lefkowitz's husband and mother prompted the Illinois Attorney General's office to investigate him six years ago, former state officials say.

Investigators went to the Chicago home of Bart Ross in the winter of 1999 and created an extensive file on him, noting his paranoia and anger at the government and judiciary, said a former investigator and the office's one-time chief of investigations.

Gov. Dean's records: More than two years after he left the governor's office to make his unsuccessful run for the presidency, the fight over public access to Howard Dean's gubernatorial records is coming before the Vermont Supreme Court in Montpelier.

Monday's hearing is on the state's appeal of a ruling that 86 boxes of records Dean sealed when he left office in 2003 are in-state presumed to be open.

Superior Court Judge Alan Cook ordered Dean and the state to identify each of the hundreds of thousands of documents in the boxes and say why each should be covered by executive privilege.

Al-Qaida terror plot: A northern Virginia man accused of joining al-Qaida and plotting with them to assassinate President Bush pleaded not guilty Monday in federal court to providing material support to terrorists and other charges.

An Aug. 22 trial date was scheduled for Ahmed Omar Abu Ali, 23, of Falls Church. He was indicted last month and charged with six counts that would allow a maximum prison term of 80 years.

Military

Recruitment protests: Four anti-war protesters accused of spilling blood at a military recruiting station in New York went on trial in federal court in May.

U.S. District Judge David Peabody set a tentative trial date of May 7 before U.S. District Judge Thomas McAvoy for the four Ithaca residents.

The protesters' case was turned over to federal prosecutors last summer after a Tompkins County Court jury deadlocked on a decision.

World

Pakistanis' rape sentences: Pakistan's Supreme Court agreed Monday to decide the case of six men sentenced to death for raping a woman on orders from a village council, following two conflicting rulings by lower courts in the high-profile case.

The men were sentenced to death in 2002 after elders ordered the rape of Mukhtar Mai, 33, as punishment for her brother's alleged illicit affair with a woman from another family. But on March 3, the convictions of five of the men were overturned and the sixth reduced to life in prison, sparking an outcry by human rights groups both in Pakistan and abroad.

The Federal Shariat Court, the nation's highest Islamic tribunal, threw out the acquittal Friday and reinstated the death sentences, a ruling the Supreme Court on Monday deemed unconstitutional.

Milan air disaster: An Italian judge on



Democracy in Nepal: Riot police detain a student activist at a protest rally in Katmandu, Nepal, on Sunday. Demonstrators chanted against King Gyanendra, demanding restoration of democracy and withdrawal of a state of emergency since last month. As demonstrations continued Monday, police arrested dozens of protesters, while communist rebels threatened to plunge the Himalayan country deeper into crisis by pledging to step up attacks. More than 300 activists were arrested in Katmandu, where some 200 people rallied in the city's Ason market. "We want democracy, we want freedom," they chanted.

Monday convicted four people and acquitted three others in a 2001 plane crash that killed 118 people at Milan's Linate airport in Italy's worst civil aviation disaster, a lawyer for victims' relatives said.

The four were convicted of multiple manslaughter and sentenced to prison terms of up to four years and four months, said lawyer Alessandro Giorgetti. Three of the defendants were employees of Italy's air traffic control agency, ENAV, while one was an airport official, Giorgetti said.

Kosovo's future: The top leaders of Serbia-Montenegro said Monday they would soon define a detailed strategy on Kosovo ahead of talks expected later this year on the contested province's future.

The meeting in the Serbian capital, Belgrade, included Serbia-Montenegro President Sveztozar Marovic, Foreign Minister Vuk Draskovic, as well as Serbia's President Boris Tadic, Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica and others.

War crimes tribunals: Kosovo's former prime minister pleaded not guilty Monday to a list of atrocities he allegedly committed as a commander of the Western-backed ethnic Albanian separatists, and a former Bosnian Serb paramilitary commander surrendered to the U.N. war crimes tribunal in The Hague, Netherlands — the 11th suspect to give himself up this year.

Ramush Haradinaj, who resigned last Wednesday as Kosovo's prime minister, responded "not guilty" to each of 37 counts of war crimes allegedly committed in 1998.

Turkey earthquakes: A strong earthquake shook eastern Turkey on Monday, damaging buildings and injuring at least 18 people two days after another quake in the region, authorities said.

The earthquake with a preliminary magni-

tude of 5.9 was centered in rural Bingol province and struck at 3:55 a.m., toppling several buildings that had been badly damaged in Saturday's magnitude 5.7 temblor, officials said. Authorities said there were no reports of any deaths, but at least 18 people were injured.

Deadly Philippines snacks: Laboratory tests show that 27 schoolchildren who died after eating cassava roots last week in the Philippines were poisoned with pesticide, health experts said Monday.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit told a news conference that tests showed pesticide was likely the cause.

"This means that it's very much possible that the food was prepared in an environment that was highly toxic and contaminated with chemical poisons and bacteria," Dayrit said.

Asian bird flu precautions: Hong Kong's government said Monday it plans to step up precautions against bird flu and slash the local chicken population by half to 1.8 million, sparking outrage from the poultry industry.

Locals have long favored freshly slaughtered chicken from live poultry outlets, but authorities want to clamp down on the practice to improve hygiene.

The reduced chicken supply of 1.8 million birds would allow officials to better control the birds if a bird flu outbreak occurs.

Violent GB protests: About 150 protesters detained at the Group of Eight summit in northern Italy in 2001 were kicked, slapped, tripped, kned in the groin and dragged by their hair, according to a report.

Prosecutors in Genoa released a 534-page report over the weekend detailing "intimidation" and "degrading" behavior by police officers, corrections officers and doctors at the Bolzaneto police garrison, Italian media reported Sunday.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press

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Mullen lists '05 priorities for naval forces

BY JASON CHUDY

Stars and Stripes

Naval Forces in Europe will be "looking to the south and east" in the coming year, expanding transformation and continuing to fight the global war on terrorism, according to Adm. Mike Mullen, the Naples, Italy-based force commander.

Mullen recently released his 2005 priorities in a 10-page letter to European-based naval forces. Mullen cites U.S. European Command's policy of "looking to the south and east," namely African and Eastern European nations,

early in the guidance, saying that naval forces will play a key role in EUCOM's efforts to work with these nations.

Earlier this year, the La Maddalena, Sardinia-based submarine tender USS Emory S. Land deployed to western Africa's Gulf of Guinea. The trip was designed, according to a

Mullen

Navy news release, to improve cooperation, and consequently security, between the U.S. and countries of that area.

In his letter, Mullen lists working with the navies of "emerging partners," as he puts them, to maintain U.S. Navy supremacy by helping them to effectively use their smaller number of naval forces.

"Unlike the land, the sea is largely ungoverned," he wrote. "No walls are constructed — no sentry posts stand — to prevent the movement of our adversaries or their weapons and material (by sea). We, along with the naval

forces of our allies and partners, must be those sentries."

Mullen also cites plans for more active U.S. participation in NATO operations and the new NATO Response Force as two areas that will expand worldwide security.

These partners include a Russian Navy that "operates, trains and communicates constructively with the United States and NATO naval forces," he wrote.

Russia recently sent ships to participate in Operation Active Endeavor, NATO's at-sea anti-terror mission. Active Endeavor includes NATO forces participating

in maritime intercept operations, in which naval forces board vessels suspected of supporting terrorism.

Although he wrote this guidance to cover the entire year, Mullen himself will most likely not be there to see it through. He was recently nominated to replace Adm. Vern Clark as Chief of Naval Operations in Washington D.C.

His replacement has not yet been named.

The entire letter is available at: <http://www.navy.mil/guide/dance/>

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1st AD soldiers training for '06 deployment to Iraq

BY STEVE MRAZ

Stars and Stripes

Over the next three months, about 3,000 soldiers from V Corps' 1st Armored Division will deploy for exercises at Hohenfels and Grafenwöhr training areas in southeast Germany to get soldiers ready for their next Iraq deployment.

This round of training was scheduled before 1st AD units returned from Iraq in July 2004. Exercise Iron Lightning will ready the units for their next trip downrange in early 2006, said Capt. Aaron Hatok, a 1st AD spokesman.

"This is what the commander considers to be the capstone of their retraining in coming back from Iraq," Hatok said. "This training puts everything together in an environment where they'll be able to conduct full spectrum operations when they're complete."

By full spectrum operations, Hatok refers to having units capable of conducting counter-insurgency operations as well as major combat operations.

About 3,000 1st AD troops recently returned from a similar two-month training exercise in Grafenwöhr and Hohenfels.

The exercises encompass lessons that U.S. forces have learned



Second Brigade Combat Team Soldiers interact with a rowdy crowd during their training exercise. About 3,000 soldiers from V Corps' 1st Armored Division will deploy over the next three months for coming exercises at Hohenfels and Grafenwöhr training areas in Germany.

in Iraq, such as having traditional field artillery regiments act as task forces performing counter-insurgency operations, Hatok said. Those counter-insurgency operations include raids and patrols.

And much like combat deployments, the action begins as soon as the units depart, said Maj. Michael Indovina, 1st AD spokesman.

"It's 'game on' the minute you leave the back gate," Indovina said.

The 2nd Brigade Combat

Team, mainly composed of the 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment, 1st Battalion, 35th Armored Regiment, and 4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery Regiment, recently completed Exercise Iron Lightning.

The Division Artillery Combat Team, primarily from the 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry Regiment; 1st Battalion, 37th Armored Regiment, and 1st Battalion, 94th Field Artillery Regiment, are training now.

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PHOTOS COURTESY CHRISTOPHER STANIS/U.S. Army

A team of 2nd Brigade soldiers conduct a raid during their training exercise at the Combat Maneuver Training Center at Hohenfels.

Rota sailor convicted of rape

A Naval Station Rota, Spain-based sailor was convicted last week of raping a female sailor while on a group liberty trip in the summer of 2004 near Souda Bay, Greece, Navy officials reported.

Petty Officer at U.S. Naval Criminal Investigative Service officials about the incident, which took place in July at a hotel in Rota, Greece, Rota base public affairs officer Alice Freeman said.

Campes, an aviation structural mechanic with Rota's Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron 2, was sentenced to 30 months' confinement and a dishonorable discharge from the Navy, Freeman said.

Also in Rota, another sailor was arrested March 4 by Spanish police on suspicion of corruption of a minor, described as an American female, Freeman said.

The case was handed to Spanish authorities after an investigation initiated by the NCIS led to the sailor's off-base residence, she said.

The accused sailor, whose name was not released by Rota officials, is scheduled to appear in Spanish court on Wednesday.

Citizen awarded service medal

RAF MILDENHALL, England — A British citizen who worked nearly three decades at RAF Mildenhall was recently awarded the Imperial Service Medal during a ceremony.

Kenneth Palmer, who spent 27 years working for the 727th Air Mobility Squadron, was given the medal by Squadron Leader James Savage, the station commander, according to information from the 100th Air Refueling Wing public affairs office.

Palmer, who retired in May 2004, performed a number of duties for the squadron over the years.

The Imperial Service Medal was created in 1902 by King Edward VII to recognize faithful and meritorious service by members of the civil services.

U.S. Navy seizes drugs

KARACHI, Pakistan — A U.S. Navy ship in the Arabian Sea seized more than two tons of hashish from a ship off Pakistan's coast and detained nine suspected drug traffickers, a Pakistani official said Monday.

The USS Bunker Hill made the seizure on Sunday and the nine Pakistani suspects were handed over to local authorities, said Lt. Cmdr. Khawar Hasan Khan, a spokesman for the Maritime Security Agency.

Khan said the boat was carrying 6,000 pounds of hashish. It was seized near

Gawadar, a coastal town about 300 miles west of Karachi.

Since the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks on the United States, the U.S. Navy has regularly patrolled the Arabian Sea off the Pakistani coast to search for terror suspects, he said.

Separately, Pakistani paramilitary troops seized 1,552 pounds of hashish after a shootout with suspected traffickers in southwestern Baluchistan province, said Lt. Col. Riazwan Malik, whose Frontier Corps made the drug haul.

Malik said the seizure was made Sunday night near the Afghan border and the suspected smugglers fled. No one was arrested and no injuries were reported.

Drug hauls are common in Pakistan, which straddles a route for narcotics from Afghanistan that are destined mostly for the lucrative European and Middle East markets.

From staff and wire reports



PHOTOS BY MICHAEL ABRAMS/Stars and Stripes

Above: The new Pat Tillman USO center at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, is scheduled to open in early April. Left: Modular housing units on Bagram Air Base. Most of the housing being built can accommodate two people per unit.



Permanent structures rise up in Bagram

BY KENT HARRIS
Stars and Stripes

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan — Whether you call it Bagram Air Base or Bagram airfield, the U.S. military facility in northeast Afghanistan is no longer just a glorified city of tents.

Slowly, but steadily, a slew of construction projects is providing troops with better housing and improved work areas as well as a handful of new shops for eating and entertainment.

"We've been in expeditionary mode, and now it's sustainable," said Air Force Col. Rita Meyer, commander of the 455th Expeditionary Mission Support Group, echoing the comments of her Army counterparts.

For airmen, soldiers and Marines on base, that means better living conditions, though no one is promising an overnight fix.

"In two to four years, we expect that everyone will be living in permanent housing," said Army Lt. Col. Jim Anderson, commander of Facility Engineering Team-17 and the de facto director of public works on base.

In fact, the foundation for the first brick-and-mortar structure designated for Army housing has been laid.

Its first occupants will likely be members of the 12th Aviation Brigade from Giebelstadt, Germany.

Capt. Paul Salinas said the two-story facilities would contain 38 bedrooms, with the possibility of a single soldier or two soldiers sharing a room.



Meyer



Anderson

More construction projects in works

Construction at the main U.S. base in Afghanistan has vastly improved troops' quality of life.

Here are some of the projects built in the last year, under way or planned:

■ The first brick-and-mortar Army housing is under construction. It has 38 bedrooms and indoor plumbing.

■ Other such structures, and modular, hotel, housing, are planned.

■ A chain fence now encircles the perimeter, replacing concertina wire.

■ Three dining facilities, two base/post exchanges, an Army hospital, offices and headquarter buildings have appeared in the last year.

■ Burger King, an Italian pizzeria, two coffee shops and a Thai restaurant are serving troops now.

■ Popeyes, Dairy Queen and Orange

Julius are scheduled to open in the next few months.

■ Besides the two exchanges, there are also a few shops selling local goods.

■ Facilities for continuing education, working out and staying in touch with those back home have also been built across the base in the last year.

■ Construction on the Pat Tillman Center, which will house the USO and a cafe for those coming in or departing, is underway.

■ An additional runway is planned so more fighter jets can use the air base.

■ Airmen volunteers built a post office, recreation room and library on the Air Force side of the base.

■ Modern shower/lavatory facilities are coming soon.

— Kent Harris

Floyd said the B-huts are an improvement on tents, but not as nice as the SEAhts — which stands for Southeast Asia Huts — in places such as Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo.

The Army's newer housing has options, metal modular housing and the brick-and-mortar buildings will gradually replace all of them.

Local nationals will build the brick-and-mortar buildings using materials they're familiar with, Floyd said.

Command Sgt. Maj. Tim Green, the top enlisted soldier in Bagram's base opera-

tions group, said he's seen a great deal of changes in his year in country.

"We went from tents to B-huts, tents to permanent structures for DFAcs (dining facilities) and the pavement," he said.

The pavement that Green referred to is a narrow strip of sidewalk that runs parallel to the main road on base: Disney Drive.

The road, which runs from the main gate in the south to the north perimeter, won't always be the only paved road on base, Floyd said.

He pointed to a road under construction that will follow the base perimeter.

Another major accomplishment is the perimeter itself, Floyd said.

There's now a chain fence with sensors along the entire perimeter, instead of just concertina wire that encircled it a year ago.

At present, all living quarters and the majority of base facilities are either located off Disney Drive or on small, dirt roads stretching from it.

On the Air Force side, Meyer said major improvements are being made on the existing runway, despite a constant, heavy influx of passengers and material.

New hangars are planned, but that wouldn't come until maintenance facilities and other offices are built.

Airmen also are living in crowded B-huts, she said.

"We are not living in the best accommodations in the region and we're going to get that changed," Meyer said.

Anderson said construction might seem slow to some, but progress is being made rapidly across the base.

"I'd like to see some pictures in five years."



Green



Floyd

Command Sgt. Maj. Tim Green, the top enlisted soldier in Bagram's base opera-

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Kurds, Shiites work to form government

Both sides dealing to put a coalition team in power for opening of parliament March 16

BY SAMEER N. YACUB
The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Kurdish leaders converged on Baghdad for talks Monday with majority Shiites as both sides pressed to secure a deal to form a coalition government before the newly elected parliament meets for the first time this week.

Shiites and Kurds have been haggling over the makeup of the government since a new National Assembly was elected Jan. 30. The parliament meets Wednesday.

The political deal calls for Jalal Talabani, a Kurdish leader, to be named president. Conservative Islamic Dawa Party leader Ibrahim al-Jaafari of the Shiite majority United Iraqi Alliance coalition would become prime minister.

"We're not interested in the government posts, we're more interested in Kurdistan and Iraq's interests," Talabani said in Sulaimaniyah, 160 miles northeast

of Baghdad.

"We have made good progress. We have a common understanding with the United Iraqi Alliance that we should establish an Iraqi state based on the principles of federalism and respecting human and women's rights."

All al-Dabagh of the clergy-backed alliance said he was optimistic a final deal would be reached before parliament meets Wednesday. But "if no agreement is reached, the first session of the national assembly will be held on Wednesday anyway," he said.

Outside the northern Iraqi city of Irbil, Kurdish leaders met Sunday to work on final details on a coalition government in accordance with a deal reached earlier this month with the United Iraqi Alliance.

"The basic Kurdish demands are not about the Kurds only but the whole of Iraq, we are working for an Iraqi process — a coalition government that respects the con-

sitution," said Interim Deputy Prime Minister Barham Saleh, a Kurd.

Interim Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari, also a Kurd, said a Kurdish delegation was to meet with the alliance again Monday before the deal is announced, emphasizing that a final agreement was close.

Talibani, Saleh and Zebari all headed to Baghdad from the north Monday.

The Kurds won 75 seats in the 275-member National Assembly. The alliance won 140 seats and needs Kurdish support to assemble the two-thirds majority to elect a president, who will then give a mandate to the prime minister.

Since 1991, Kurds enjoyed de facto independence, protected from Saddam Hussein's military by a U.S.-enforced no-fly zone. The Kurdish enclave since has been off-limits to the Iraqi army.

In violence Monday in northern Iraq, gunmen killed Hussain

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Sunday, at least 1,513 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,153 died as a result of hostile action, according to the Defense Department.

The figures include four military civilians. The AP count is five higher than the Defense Department's tally, last updated at 10 a.m. Friday.

The British military has reported 86 deaths. Italy has reported 20 deaths; Ukraine, 18; Poland, 17; Spain, 11; Bulgaria, eight; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each. Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary, Kazakhstan and Latvia have reported one death each.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ No deaths reported.

The latest identifications reported by the military:

■ No identifications reported.

Hilal Sarsam, a cameraman for the Kurdish satellite channel KurdSat, witnesses in Mosul said.

Twelve miles south of Baghdad, a suicide car bomb exploded in

Yousfiyah, said police Lt. Adnan Mohammed. The blast missed a convoy of sport utility vehicles, hitting a civilian vehicle instead and wounding four people.

Joint Chiefs chairman in Iraq to see progress

BY ROBERT BURNS
The Associated Press

MOSUL, Iraq — The new commander of U.S. forces in northern Iraq said Monday he is encouraged at progress in giving Iraq more control over their own security and economic future.

Brig. Gen. Kevin Bergner told Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, that a portion of Mosul airport would soon be turned over to the Iraqis for use as a civilian airport and an economic development zone.

"This is one of the biggest changes," Bergner said.

Myers arrived in Mosul on Monday morning aboard an Air Force C-17 cargo plane from Cairo, Egypt, where he met Sunday with his Egyptian military counterparts and with U.S. military officers.

It was Myers' first visit to Iraq since the Jan. 30 elections.

He said before arriving that he hoped to see how much progress is being made in training and equipping Iraqi security forces. Mosul, the largest city in northern Iraq, is mainly Sunni Arab and Kurdish.

Myers, who is the most senior American military officer, was accompanied on the flight to Mosul by his wife, Mary Jo Myers, who

immediately departed for a visit elsewhere in the Persian Gulf.

Myers had said Sunday in Cairo that about 142,000 Iraqi security forces are now trained, including police.

He said the key is improving their capability to deal with the violent insurgency so that American forces eventually can be withdrawn.

Also in Egypt, Myers said the United States will resume participating in the Bright Star war games in Egypt this year after scaling back in 2001 due to the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and canceling in 2003 because of the Iraq war.

The difficulty of providing substantial numbers of U.S. ground forces for joint exercises with allies while the fighting continues in Iraq is not unique to Bright Star.

It is one of the biggest multinational military exercises, with about 70,000 troops from about a dozen countries usually taking part.

Myers, on his first visit to Egypt in more than three years, met with Defense Minister Mohamed Hussein Tantawi and Lt. Gen. Hamdi Moustafa Weheba, who is Myers' counterpart as Egypt's chief of defense.

Former Italian hostage undergoes surgery

ROME — The Italian journalist and former hostage in Iraq who was wounded by U.S. gunfire in Baghdad underwent surgery on her shoulder Monday, her second since the shooting, a Rome hospital said. Giuliana Sgrena has been hospitalized in Rome's Cello military hospital since her return to Italy on March 5, a day after being released from a month's captivity and being mistakenly shot by U.S. troops on her way to Baghdad airport.

In Monday's operation, surgeons sutured muscles and tendons in her left shoulder, the hospital said in a bulletin. Sgrena is expected to be released in a few days, it said.

From The Associated Press



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MICHAEL ABRAMS/Stars and Stripes

A dump truck pours gravel that the grader will then level at the end of a ceremony that marked the beginning of the resurfacing of the Panjshir Parwan road near Charikar, Afghanistan. The Provincial Reconstruction Team Parwan stationed at Bagram and the U.S. Agency for International Development were instrumental in getting the work on the road done.

Repair of Afghan road draws praise and celebration

BY KENT HARRIS

Stars and Stripes

CHARIKAR, Afghanistan — A resurfaced road generally doesn't draw much attention in many parts of the world.

But in Afghanistan, where good roads are a rarity, a ceremony to announce a plan to upgrade about 45 miles between the provinces of Panjshir and Parwan drew a crowd, featuring the country's president and vice president, the U.S. ambassador and the senior U.S. military commander in Afghanistan.

Afghan President Hamid Karzai, U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad and a handful of local and national officials spoke under a pavilion that helped to keep away some of the intermittent rain Monday afternoon.

"Afghanistan has come a long way, but it still has a long way to go," said Khalilzad, who will soon become the American ambassador to Iraq. "The reconstruction needs of the country are great. Especially given the destruction of the last 25 years."

The road — currently a mix of

dirt along with a few rocks — will serve a number of purposes, Khalilzad said. He cited local industry, agriculture, tourism, coal mining, security and medical care as areas that would benefit.

The U.S. Agency for International Development is funding the project, which is set to start soon. The work will cost about \$2.7 million, according to the Associated Press.

Karzai, speaking in Pashto, received a warm welcome from the crowd. He arrived and departed via a U.S. Chinook helicopter. American and Afghan forces provided heavy security for the event both on the ground and in the air.

Lt. Gen. David Barno, the senior American commander in Afghanistan, said the road would likely be used by the U.S. military on occasion, but said that wasn't the reason he was happy to see it going ahead.

"Everything we do to improve the economy for the Afghans is a benefit for us," he said. "This whole area was just devastated by the Soviets and the Taliban."

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Karzai



Khalilzad

Judge blocks U.S. from transferring 13 Yemenis

WASHINGTON — A federal judge has blocked the government from transferring 13 Yemenis from the U.S. detention center at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, until a hearing is held on concerns the detainees may be mistreated in another country.

The judge's ruling temporarily blocks any plans by the government to transfer the detainees to prisons in other countries.

Lawyers are worried the government will try to move them to another country in order to "warehouse them in a prison, provide them with no legal process and, in effect, avoid the American court process altogether," said Marc Falkoff, an attorney for the detainees.

From The Associated Press

Ex-Sanchez aide in Iraq to take intelligence post

BY JON R. ANDERSON

Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — Two of the top officers who served under Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez in Iraq — and were responsible for oversight of the units at Abu Ghraib detention facility at the time — have been given new high-profile jobs.

Maj. Gen. Barbara Fast, who served as chief of intelligence for Sanchez, will take command of the U.S. Army Intelligence Center at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., on Wednesday.

Cleared of wrongdoing by military investigators, Fast will be handed the colors of the service's main intelligence training schoolhouse from Gen. Kevin Byrnes, the commander of the Army's Training and Doctrine Command, according to Fort Huachuca spokesman Maj. Paul Karnaze.

The top post at the Intelligence Center has been vacant since Maj. Gen. James A. Marks left in June. Although Fast arrived as Marks was leaving with orders to take over the school, her assignment was put into a nine-month limbo as investigators looked into her role in Abu Ghraib scandal.

An investigation led by former Defense Secretary James Schlesinger released in August criticized Fast, finding that she "failed to advise (Sanchez) properly on the directives and policies

needed" for interrogations and for inadequately monitoring CIA operations at the detention facilities.

Since then, however, internal Army investigations have cleared Fast of any wrongdoing.

"She's maintained that she had a job to do and got on with it," Karnaze said. While he said Fast will offer a brief news conference after assuming command, he does not expect her to entertain questions about Abu Ghraib.

"Her focus is on the future now," he said.

Meanwhile, Maj. Gen. Walter Wodjakowski, Sanchez's deputy commander in Iraq, has been given a position of greater responsibility as acting deputy commander of Army forces in Europe, directly under Gen. B.B. Bell, said Lt. Col. Jane Crichton, a U.S. Army Europe spokeswoman. The position is traditionally a three-star assignment requiring Senate approval.

During his yearlong tour in Iraq, Wodjakowski was responsible for overseeing V Corps' "separate brigades," including the 800th Military Police Brigade and the 205th Military Intelligence Brigade. Both units were responsible for operations at Abu Ghraib and their commanders were harshly criticized for weak and ineffectual leadership that directly contributed to the abuses, according to several investigations.

An investigation led by Lt. Gen. Anthony Jones concluded that Wodjakowski along with Sanchez "failed to ensure proper staff oversight of detention and interrogation operations," highlighting Wodjakowski's "direct oversight" of the two brigade commanders.

Brig. Gen. Janis Karpinski, commander of the 800th MP Brigade, who recently received a letter of reprimand for leadership failures, said Wodjakowski once told her "I don't care if we're holding 15,000 innocent civilians! We're winning the war!" according to a sworn statement by Karpinski obtained by the American Civil Liberties Union through the Freedom of Information Act.

Both Wodjakowski and Sanchez — who remains commander of V Corps — are still under investigation.

Until recently Wodjakowski had remained Sanchez's deputy in Germany, after returning from Iraq. According to the Army General Officer Management Office in Washington, Wodjakowski had been reassigned, serving as "special assistant" to Bell, a job that does not otherwise exist at that level.

In real terms, Crichton said, Wodjakowski now works as Bell's acting deputy and chief of staff. Traditionally either job is a career-enhancing position usually reserved for leaders being groomed for promotion.

E-mail: Jon R. Anderson at: jon.anderson@starsandstripes.osd.mil

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Photos from the Front

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ABOVE Sgt. John Diaz of the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, pulls perimeter security during a patrol near the village of Omna, Afghanistan.

Sgt. Frank Magni/U.S. Army

BELOW Army Cpl. Kevin Turner of the 307th Psychological Operations Company at Camp Taj, Iraq, distributes fliers, key chains and other items to Iraqi children during a U.S. military patrol through an apartment complex in Sha'ab, northwest of Sadr City. The leaflets, printed in Arabic, encouraged local citizens to take pride in the neighborhoods and engage in community cleanup efforts.

Vince Little/Stars and Stripes



RIGHT Army Spc. Angela Stroukas, 26, of Valdosta, Ga., a member of the 107th Military Police Company, feeds a group of 2-month-old puppies during a stop at the Khadamayah Patrol Station in Baghdad, Iraq. The company, which has run daily patrols out of Forward Operating Base Falcon for the last 11 months, typically checks in on the litter while monitoring the city's northwest sector.

Vince Little/Stars and Stripes

BOTTOM RIGHT Dr. (Maj.) Terry Lakin, the flight surgeon for the 28th Infantry Division's 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, examines the partially amputated finger of an Afghan man who assists in collecting unexploded ordnance at Kandahar airfield. Lakin was selected as the Army Medical Department's flight surgeon of the year for 2004.

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IN THE WORLD

Trying to control Taiwan

China approves bill to OK use of force against Taipei

BY CHRISTOPHER BODEEN

The Associated Press

BEIJING — China's parliament enacted a law Monday authorizing force to stop rival Taiwan from pursuing formal independence, sparking outrage on the self-governing island and warnings that the measure would fuel regional tensions.

The ceremonial National People's Congress passed the law despite U.S. appeals for restraint. It came a day after President Hu Jintao called on China's military to be ready for war and followed a 12.6 percent increase in the country's defense budget for 2005.

Premier Wen Jiabao said the mainland still wants to unite peacefully with the island and doesn't want to disrupt the status quo.

"It is not targeted at the people of Taiwan, nor is it a war bill," Wen said at a news conference. But he also warned outsiders that "it was also aimed to deter them from wishing to seek foreign interference."

A Taiwanese government spokesman rejected the measure as a "serious provocation."

"It also brought emotional pain to the Taiwanese people, restricts Taiwan's freedom and democracy, and has a serious impact on security in the East-Asia region," said Joseph Wu, chairman of the



A demonstrator displays anti-China slogans outside the Legislature during a rally against China's anti-secession law on Monday in Taipei, Taiwan.

island's Mainland Affairs Council, which handles policy toward Beijing.

In a session broadcast on national television, the Chinese delegates burst into applause after the law was approved by a 2,896-0 vote, with two abstentions. The body usually votes overwhelmingly for Communist Party policies, but the emphatic result was meant to send a message of

the intensity of Beijing's sentiment on the issue.

Taiwan and China split in 1949. Beijing has threatened repeatedly to attack if it tries to make its de facto independence permanent. The United States is Taiwan's biggest arms supplier and could be drawn into any conflict over the island.

A leading Taiwanese lawmaker criticized the measure as a "save-law."

It shows that China "feels futile and doesn't know how to deal with Taiwan's democracy and freedom," said Chen Chin-jun, a member of the ruling Democratic Progressive Party.

The law says China would "employ nonpeaceful means and other necessary measures to protect China's sovereignty and territorial integrity." It said such steps could be taken if Taiwan declared formal independence, if "major incidents" occurred causing Taiwan to separate permanently from China, or if "possibilities for a peaceful reunification should be completely exhausted."

The law doesn't give details of what specific developments might trigger an attack. It adds no new threats or conditions, but it codifies the measures for authorizing military action.

Legislators said the law would send a message that Beijing's patience was wearing thin.



A demonstrator hangs with a rock on the gate of the Palestinian Authority presidential compound as Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas meets U.S. Secretary-General Kofi Annan during a demonstration against Israel's separation barrier in Ramallah.

Israel approves final route for barrier wall

BY MARK LAVIE

The Associated Press

JERUSALEM — Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has approved the final route of a barrier around Jerusalem that will include the largest Jewish settlement in the West Bank on the Israeli side, officials said Monday, prompting Palestinian complaints that Israel is endangering peace efforts.

The decision means the barrier will encompass lands claimed by the Palestinians for a future state, including traditionally Arab east Jerusalem, the intended Palestinian capital. The barrier also will include a chunk of the Palestinian town of Bethlehem, south of Jerusalem, to encompass a Jewish shrine, officials said.

Israel began building a separation barrier in the West Bank two years ago, saying its aim was to keep out Palestinian attackers.

Palestinians say Israel could have built the barrier on its own territory if the only concern was security. They say the real intention was to grab West Bank land and draw a final border without waiting for a peace deal.

Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat warned that approval of the Jerusalem segment could destroy efforts to revive peace talks.

"This is a policy of dictation and not negotiation," Erekat said. "This prejudices and prejudices the outcome of permanent status negotiations."

Few nations supporting China's new law

The Associated Press

TOKYO — China's threat Monday to oppose Taiwan's independence with military force triggered a call for peaceful dialogue from Japan and a discussion of Australia's treaty obligations should a war break out. But Russia and Pakistan supported Beijing's new legislation.

"I want the two sides to work hard toward a peaceful solution, so there will not be any negative impact," said Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, whose government recently declared a diplomatic resolution of the Taiwan dispute as a strategic objective with the United States.

An outbreak of hostilities would be a severe blow to stability in East Asia, possibly prompting a response from the United States — which has some 50,000 troops in Japan and 35,000 in South Korea — to defend Taiwan.

Such a conflict could pin top U.S. allies in the area such as Japan and Australia between treaty obligations to Washington and reluctance to alienate China, which is assuming a growing political and economic role in the region.

Russia on Monday reaffirmed Moscow's opposition to independence for Taiwan and said it considered the question of Taiwan an internal matter for China, a top strategic partner for Russia in Asia.

Iran: Nuclear energy needed

BY TAREK AL-ISAWI

The Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran — Iran, accused by the United States of using a nuclear energy program as a front to produce weapons, has repeatedly said its program is for peaceful purposes only, and that it needs nuclear power to generate enough electricity to remain self-sufficient.

But the United States is disputing that claim, too, saying the Gulf nation does not need nuclear power for electricity because it has massive oil and gas reserves. Iran has set up a nuclear mission for the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries this week.

In a region largely dependent on the West for vital military and in-

dustrial needs, energy-rich Iran has long stood out as a nearly self-sufficient nation that is exerting its efforts to produce nuclear energy despite stiff resistance from the international community.

Iran's total recoverable oil reserves exceed 130 billion barrels, equal to 12 percent of the world's oil. It has an oil production capacity of 4.2 million barrels a day, making it the second biggest producer of oil in the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries after Saudi Arabia.

It has also discovered new oil fields in recent years, including a new field announced last week — Ramin, which is said to hold 855 million barrels.

The U.S.-based Energy Infor-

mation Administration estimated that in 2003, Iran produced 3.9 million barrels of oil a day, exported 2.5 million of those and locally consumed 1.4 million.

However, the country disputes the claim that those reserves mean it should not seek nuclear power.

"America has more oil than Iran, and Russia has more gas than Iran, and both of them have many nuclear power plants," said Asadollah Sabouri, deputy head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran.

Iran's Nuclear Energy Council has said the country must develop 7,000 megawatts of electricity through nuclear power plants by 2021 to meet its increasing electricity demands. Iran's parliament has asked for the construction of 20 nuclear power plants.

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Beirut sees new anti-Syria protest drawing thousands



A Lebanese opposition protester wears a hat with arrows referring to Syria getting out during a demonstration Monday in Martyrs Square, central Beirut, Lebanon.

BY SAM F. GHATTAS
The Associated Press

BEIRUT, Lebanon — Hundreds of thousands of opposition demonstrators chanted "Freedom, sovereignty, independence" and unfurled a huge Lebanese flag in Beirut on Monday, the biggest protest yet in the opposition's duel of street rallies with supporters of the Damascus-backed government.

Crowds of men, women and children flooded Martyrs Square, spilling over into nearby streets, while more from across the country packed the roads into Beirut — responding to an opposition call to demonstrate for the removal of Syrian troops from Lebanon.

"We are coming to liberate our country. We are coming to demand the truth," said Fatma Trad, a veiled Sunni Muslim

woman who traveled from the remote region of Dinniyeh in northern Lebanon to take part.

The assassination of former Prime Minister Rafik Hariri exactly one month ago sparked the series of protests against Syria, the dominant power in Lebanon.

The throngs fell silent at 12:55 p.m. — the exact time Hariri was killed four weeks ago by a huge bomb in Beirut. The silence was broken only by church bells tolling and the flutter of flags.

Monday's protest easily topped a pro-government rally of hundreds of thousands of people last week by the Shiite Muslim militant group Hezbollah. That show of strength forced the opposition to try to regain its momentum.

Syria's military withdrawal continued Monday, with intelligence agents closing two offices in the northern towns of Anyoun and Deir Ammar, on the coastal road between the port of Tripoli and the Syrian border. Intelligence agents also dismantled two checkpoints in the Akkar area. About 50 intelligence agents in all departed for unknown destinations, although it was believed to be most intense Syria.

Most intelligence offices, the widely resented arm through which Syria has controlled many aspects of Lebanese life, remained in northern and central Lebanon after Syrian troops moved east, closer to the Syrian border.

The opposition is demanding a full Syrian withdrawal, the resignations of Lebanese security chiefs and an international investigation into Hariri's Feb. 14 assassination.

A senior Lebanese army officer said Sunday that 4,000 Syrian soldiers — more than a quarter of those serving in Lebanon just a week ago — have been brought back to Syria.

Zeina Karam of The Associated Press contributed to this report.



Karmila Wati, right, sits with Samsol Winda on Monday during their wedding ceremony inside a tent at a refugee camp in Mata le, Aceh Besar, Indonesia. The wedding ceremony was a first for the camp and brought rare smiles to people still traumatized by the Dec. 26 disaster.

Tsunami survivors find love in a refugee camp

BY MICHAEL CASEY
The Associated Press

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia — Karmila Wati first noticed Samsol Winda's smile when he checked her into a refugee camp after their homeland was lashed by Asia's deadly tsunami. Winda kept coming back to ensure Wati and her family were getting relief supplies and soon romance bloomed.

The couple — who both lost their homes and some relatives in the tsunami — married at a mosque on Monday and then held a party for fellow survivors under a leaky United Nations tarp in their survivors' camp.

The wedding ceremony was a first for the camp and brought rare smiles to the faces of people still traumatized by the Dec. 26 disaster that killed more than 125,000 in their home province of Aceh and left some 400,000 homeless.

"This is so unbelievable. I never thought I'd meet my husband in a refugee camp," said Wati, 21, sitting next to her husband in their tent.

The newlyweds wore traditional Acehese wedding clothes — Wati in a yellow dress with a golden, spiked crown while Winda, 25, wore a black and yellow coat, a green hat and a small sword known as a rengcong at his side.

For the 50 guests the party was a brief respite from their problems and showed a glimmer of normalcy in the badly damaged provincial capital of Banda Aceh. Camp residents volunteered to help out.

"This ceremony helps us forget everything we have been through," said Dewi, 28, as she washed dishes from the party. It was gratifying to see someone happy for a day, said Dewi, who like many Indonesians uses only one name.

Dutch study: Euthanasia of infants underreported

The Associated Press

At least five mercy killings of newborns occur for every one reported to authorities in the Netherlands, doctors there reported just months after the first startling news of the controversial practice.

While still very rare, euthanizing terminally ill newborns is more common than first believed, according to Dutch doctors, and other experts say it also occurs, quietly, in other countries.

Since 1985, the Netherlands has allowed euthanasia for competent adults.

In 2002, doctors at University Medical Center Groningen helped create the so-called Groningen protocol, a list of standards for performing and reporting euthanasia of newborns with serious, incurable deformities. The aim was to

encourage more reporting and discussion.

Two pediatricians at the hospital, Drs. Pieter J.J. Sauer and Eduard Verhagen, report in Thursday's *New England Journal of Medicine* that 22 mercy killings of newborns who otherwise would have lingered in intensive care for years were reported to authorities from 1997 to 2004, about three each year. But national surveys of Dutch doctors have found 15 to 20 such cases a year.

Verhagen, who supports such euthanasia, said in an interview the doctors were allowed to review district attorneys' records on the 22 reported cases. None was prosecuted.

"We believe that all cases must be reported if the country is to prevent uncontrolled and unjustified euthanasia," the doctors wrote.

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IN THE STATES

Ex-Bush adviser Hughes tapped for State post

BY ANNE GEARAN

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Declaring the United States must do a "better job of engaging the Muslim world," Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice introduced former presidential adviser Karen Hughes Monday as the Bush administration's choice for a State Department post designed to change Islamic perceptions about America.

"I'm eager to listen and to learn," said Hughes, who, pending confirmation by the Senate, would serve as undersecretary of state for public diplomacy with the rank of ambassador.

Rice said the United States must do much more to counter the "hateful propaganda" that is so common in the Islamic world. She said Hughes believes strongly that the United States "must mobilize young people around the world to shatter the mistrust of past grievances and

to foster a new spirit of tolerance and mutual respect."

Also in attendance at the ceremony was Dina Powell, an Egyptian-born former White House aide who is slated to be a top aide to Hughes.

Hughes, who for years has had a major voice in crafting President Bush's domestic message, is a former counselor to the president who left the White House in 2002 to move her family back to Texas.

She is also a former Texas television reporter. She has continued to advise the president from her home in Austin. Although not a diplomat by training, Hughes had a hand in several foreign policy initiatives during Bush's first term, including efforts to promote democracy and improve the lives of women and children in Afghanistan.

Hughes and Powell will focus on Bush's plan to spread democracy in the Middle East, an effort that has gained momentum with recent elections in Iraq and the Palestinian territories.



Hughes

Answers sought after Wis. church shooting

JULIE WILLIAMS

The Associated Press

BROOKFIELD, Wis. — It was just another weekend service for churchgoers in this Milwaukee suburb when, without warning, they began to be gunned down by one of their own.

Now victims' relatives are struggling to keep their faith and find answers.

"This is a totally senseless thing," said Jeff Miller, whose 44-year-old brother, Gerald, died shielding an elderly woman who survived. "He was a great guy. He didn't deserve to die."

Terry Ratzmann, a churchgoer known for sharing homegrown vegetables with his neighbors, walked into the room and police said he shot 22 bullets from a 9 mm handgun within a minute.

None of those who knew him expected Ratzmann to be violent, though some said he had grap-

pled with depression. neighbors said he was quiet and devout, that he liked to tinker about his house and garden. He would even release the chipmunks caught in traps he set in his yard.

But Saturday, the Sabbath for the Living Church of God, Ratzmann turned on worshippers. When it was over, seven people, including the church's minister and his teenage son, were killed, and four others, including the minister's wife, were wounded. Ratzmann, 44, then shot himself; he sat slumped against the back wall with four rounds left in his gun, police said.

"He wasn't a dark guy. He was average Joe," said Shane Colwell, a neighbor who knew Ratzmann for about a decade. "It's not like he ever pushed his beliefs on anyone else."

The 44-year-old computer technician lived with his mother and sister about two miles from the



Amber Herman cries Sunday outside a hotel in Brookfield, Wis., where a gunman opened fire Saturday at a church service, killing seven people and himself.

suburban Milwaukee hotel where police say he opened fire during service. Ratzmann regularly attended the gatherings.

Member Chandra Frazier said on TV's "Good Morning America" that he had walked out of a recent sermon "sort of in a huff."

The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reported Monday the Feb. 26 sermon that upset Ratzmann had made the point that people's problems are of their own making.

Charles Bryce, the national church's director of administration, said Monday he was told the sermon was about "basic Christian living" but was trying to get more information about what specifically upset Ratzmann.

"That's something we just don't know. I don't know whether we'll ever know," Bryce said.

Although he left no suicide note and gave no explanation for the killings, investigators said Ratzmann was on the verge of losing his job. Agents who searched Ratzmann's home found three computers containing many encrypted files. They also found a rifle and ammunition.

Jackson's accuser back on stand

SANTA MARIA, Calif. — Michael Jackson's attorney challenged the credibility of the pop star's accuser Monday by cross-examining him about similarities between a statement he testified Jackson made and a statement the boy had attributed to his grandmother.

Cross-examination of the 15-year-old who claims Jackson molested him resumed after a three-day break in testimony.

Attorney Thomas Mesereau Jr. recalled that the boy testified Thursday that Jackson told him that if men don't masturbate they might rape women. The attorney noted that the boy told sheriff's investigators in an interview that his grandmother had told him the same thing. Jackson arrived on time Monday, his first court appearance since a failure to appear last week triggered a threat of arrest by the judge and a race to the courthouse in his pajama bottoms from a hospital where he was said to be receiving treatment for a back injury.

He acknowledged chanting fans by turning, waving and flashing a V-sign.

Iger tapped to replace Eisner as Disney CEO

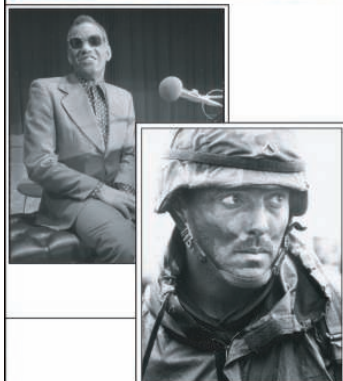
LOS ANGELES — Michael Eisner, the longtime CEO of The Walt Disney Co., will step down a year earlier than expected, handing over the reins to Robert Iger and ending a tumultuous stint atop the entertainment giant.

Iger, 54, the firm's current president and chief operating officer, was named to succeed Eisner as chief executive. He will assume his new role Oct. 1 and will co-lead the company with Eisner during the transition, Disney's board said.

He inherits the company as it continues an earnings recovery, opens a new theme park in Hong Kong, enjoys a ratings boost at its ailing ABC network and builds on success of its dominant ESPN cable network.

From The Associated Press

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People gather at a makeshift memorial outside the Sheraton hotel Sunday in Brookfield, Wis.

AP photos

Atlanta hostage recalls 72-hour ordeal

BY ELIOTT C. MCLAUGHLIN
The Associated Press

ATLANTA — As the Fulton County Courthouse reopened Monday — nearly 72 hours after a judge, deputy and court stenographer were shot dead there Friday — accounts emerged detailing the ordeal of the woman whom the alleged gunman held hostage before she notified police of his whereabouts.

The woman, Ashley Smith, came forward Sunday saying Brian Nichols let her go after they bonded while discussing God, family, pancakes and the massive

manhunt going on outside her apartment.

Authorities said the rampage started when Nichols overpowered a sheriff's deputy who was transporting Nichols for the resumption of his trial on rape and other charges. Nichols could appear in court as early as Tuesday, authorities said.



Smith

Judge Rowland Barnes and his court stenographer, Julie Brandau, had been working Nichols' trial when they were killed. Sheriff's Sgt. Hoyt Teasley was killed outside the courthouse, and U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent David Wilhelm was killed later.

Smith was hailed as a hero for the way she handled herself after Nichols confronted her in the parking lot of her apartment when she returned from a store around 2 a.m. Sunday.

"She acted very cool and level-headed," said Gwinnett County Police Officer Darren Moloney.

"It was an absolutely best-case scenario that happened, a complete opposite of what you expected to happen."

Over the course of the night, Nichols untied Smith, and some of the fear lessened as they talked. Nichols told Smith he felt like "he was already dead," but Smith urged him to consider the fact that he was still alive a "miracle."

"I believe God brought him to my door," Smith said Sunday.

"You're here in my apartment for some reason," she told him, saying he might be destined to be

caught and to spread the word of God to fellow prisoners.

After Smith left the apartment and called police, officers soon surrounded her suburban apartment complex and Nichols gave up peacefully, waving a white towel in surrender.

"I honestly think when I looked at him that he didn't want to do it anymore," Smith said.

Choking back tears Sunday, she said she told Nichols that her husband died four years ago and if he hurt her, her little girl wouldn't have a mother or father. Smith's attorney, Josh Archer, said her husband died in her arms after being stabbed. Smith's 5-year-old daughter was not at the apartment during the ordeal.

The two talked about the Bible and she handed him photos of her family. When morning came, Smith said, Nichols was "overwhelmed" when she made him pancakes with real butter. He told her he "just wanted some normalness to his life," she said.

Gang members arrested

WASHINGTON — More than 100 alleged members of the violent Honduran street gang MS-13 have been arrested in a nationwide sweep, authorities said Monday.

Using information from local and state law enforcement agencies, federal agents charged 103 members of the Mara Salvatrucha, or MS-13, gang with a range of criminal and immigration charges. The arrests came in the New York, Washington, Los Angeles, Baltimore, Newark, Miami and Dallas metropolitan areas over the last several weeks.

Officials said MS-13 is one of the largest and most violent street gangs in the United States. The gang has carried out beatings and grenade attacks in Central America and is known to hack its enemies with machetes in cities along the East Coast in the United States.

The arrests are the result of a new "Operation Community Shield" nationwide sting by the U.S. Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement to target violent gangs.

Post office reopens

HAMILTON, N.J. — The New Jersey post office that handed anthrax-laced letters reopened Monday morning, nearly 3½ years after the deadly mailings that further heightened the nation's fears in the weeks after the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks.

The opening had more the air of a gala than a normal day at a post office. Officials were on hand with cake, and the low-slung building was decorated with balloons.

The post office was closed on Oct. 18, 2001, after NBC anchor Tom Brokaw, two U.S. senators and the offices of the New York Post received anthrax-laced letters that went through Hamilton.

From The Associated Press

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Volunteer pilots train to disarm a potential hijacker during in a weapon retention class at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Brunswick, Ga.

Gun-in-the-cockpit program progress upsetting to pilots

By LESLIE MILLER

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — While the pace of training and deployment of armed pilots on commercial flights has picked up, supporters of the program say the Bush administration still is making it unnecessarily difficult for crews to take guns on the cockpit.

Pilots monitoring the program estimate between 4,000 and 4,500 have been trained and deputized to carry guns since the Federal Flight Deck Officer program began April 2003. That is about three times as many as a year ago, yet a fraction of the 95,000 pilots flying for U.S. airlines.

David Mackett, president of the Airline Pilots Security Alliance, a group formed to lobby for guns in the cockpit, said tens of thousands of his colleagues are interested in the program.

"We have an armed pilots program that's arming very few pilots," said Mackett, who hasn't signed up because of the way the program is run. He said many others won't join for the same reason.

Mackett contends the Transportation Security Administration isn't moving to get substantially more pilots trained to carry guns because it has never really wanted the program.

TSA spokesman Mark Hatfield

disputed that, saying agency chief David Stone fully backs the effort and that procedures have been changed to more quickly get pilots into the program.

"I've got a pipeline with a couple of thousands applicants and we're running two full classes a week," Hatfield said. The TSA can train about 50 pilots per class.

Last year, Congress failed to pass a bill that would speed the application and training process, allow pilots to carry guns in holsters and let those among them with military or law enforcement backgrounds carry guns immediately.

Mackett said the pilots will try again this year.

Report emphasizes the vulnerability of aviation security

By LARA JAKES JORDAN

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The nation's aviation system remains vulnerable to attacks by al-Qaida and other terrorists who may be targeting noncommercial aircraft and helicopters, according to a government report.

But officials said the report by the Homeland Security Department and the FBI concludes that commercial airlines also remain susceptible to attack, despite billions of dollars worth of security investments. Moreover, members of al-Qaida are believed to be examining and testing U.S. security systems for weaknesses, officials said.

The confidential report, dated Feb. 25, reflects what officials have long said: that beefing up security in one sector would inevitably prompt terrorists to target other areas that might not be under the same level of scrutiny.

However, the report, drafts of which have been circulating since late last year, is the first to pull the intelligence together in a single package, officials said.

It was distributed to state, local and private sector officials who deal with counterterrorism concerns, said Homeland Security spokesman Brian R. Kohn. "We have made dramatic improvements to security in all components of the aviation industry over the course of the past three years," Roehrkasse said.

A counterterrorism official said helicopters were singled out as potential targets in intelligence that surfaced last August. That intelligence also led Homeland Security to raise the terror alert level in Washington, New York and northern New Jersey to protect financial institutions there.

More than \$12 billion has been spent on explosive detectors, armored cockpit doors, screeners, air marshals and other aviation security systems since the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks.

President Bush has proposed giving the Transportation Security Administration \$5.6 billion in 2006 — \$2 billion of which for airline passenger screening and \$1.45 billion for airline baggage screening.

But a report by congressional investigators in December found that TSA "has primarily focused on strengthening the security of commercial aviation." That report noted that TSA doesn't understand the risks posed by small private planes, fails to issue meaningful threat information to general aviation airports and can't make sure charter airlines and flight schools comply with security requirements.

Officials said that the thousands of general aviation airports — which host recreational planes, business jets, helicopters and other kinds of noncommercial aircraft — must all have security measures that are equivalent to TSA mandates at commercial airports.

Former Democratic leader Daschle joins Washington lobbying firm as adviser

By CARSON WALKER

The Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. — Former Senate Democratic leader Tom Daschle plans to put his 26 years of experience in Congress to work at a Washington, D.C., law firm as a public policy adviser.

Daschle, who lost a re-election bid in November to Republican John Thune, said he won't lobby for Alston & Bird LLP, but will advise its clients on topics with which he's familiar.

"I want to continue my involvement in the public policy issues that I care a great deal about. Those issues include energy, Native Americans, health care, international trade, agriculture and technology," he said Sunday in a telephone interview from his Washington home.

One of things he'll do is counsel clients on how to work through legal and regulatory hurdles in Washington and internationally, he said.

Daschle joins former Kansas Sen. Bob Dole, who is already in the company's legislative and public policy group. Dole, the 1996 Republican presidential nomi-

nee, said in a statement that he looks forward to working with Daschle.

"Tom is the consummate public servant, and while we may have differed on some political issues, I look forward to working together at Alston & Bird, as we tap his unique knowledge of public policy to serve the firm's clients," Dole said.

Daschle, 57, was first elected to the House in 1978 and served four terms before moving to the Senate, where he was named minority leader in 1994. He was majority leader starting in June 2001, but again became minority leader after Democrats lost their slim majority in the 2002 elections.

Daschle lost the nation's highest-profile and most expensive Senate race in November by 4,500 votes to Thune. The hard-fought contest cost a combined \$33.8 million, according to Federal Election Commission figures.

Alston & Byrd has 700 attorneys with offices in Atlanta, Charlotte, New York and Washington. Daschle's appointment was official Monday, but it will be several weeks before he starts work.

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Euro costs	\$1.3761
British pound	\$1.6191
Japanese yen (March 16)	101.00
South Korean won (March 15)	375.00
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	4.7628
British pound	1.6191
Canada (Dollar)	1.2943
Denmark (Krone)	6.5596
Egypt (Pound)	\$1.3459/£1.25
EUR (Euro)	0.7936
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.7865
Hungary (Forint)	133.36
Iceland (Krona)	47.36
Israel (Shekel)	4.2535
Japan (Yen)	100.88
Kuwait (Dinar)	4.2535
Norway (Krone)	5.71
Philippines (Peso)	54.93
Saudi Arabia (Riyal)	3.58
Singapore (Dollar)	1.618
South Korea (Won)	1,000.30
Switzerland (Franc)	75.26
Thailand (Baht)	38.25
U.S. (Dollar)	1.0000

(Military exchange rates are those used by customers at military aid facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, Netherlands and the United Kingdom.) For noncommercial exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check your local military bank facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign currencies to one dollar, except for the British pound, which is represented in dollars-to-pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.

PRECIOUS METALS

London close	
Gold	\$441.90
Silver	\$17.35

INTEREST RATES

Prime rate	5.50
Discount rate	3.50
Federal funds market rate	3.25
3-month bill	2.75
90-day bill	2.75
Source: The Associated Press, Bank of America	

Cents and Sensibility

Money tip of the day

Stomping out gas myths

MarketWatch

NEW YORK — Gas prices are forecast to rise further, and the media are filled with tips on how to save on gas and get better mileage from your vehicle.

Unfortunately, with the good tips and tricks comes misinformation that can actually cost you time and money. So says Mark A. Baxter, director of the Maguire Energy Institute at Southern Methodist University in Dallas.

He offers this advice on two less-than-useful tricks:

Myth: Once you've filled your tank, twist the gas pump nozzle and tip up the hose to drain any last remnants of gasoline into your tank.

Believers claim this can put as much as an extra half-cup in your tank.

Truth: "I don't think it's worth the value for your time and effort, but it is a few drops of gasoline," Baxter says. However,

don't expect to get anywhere near a half-cup.

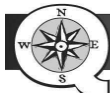
Myth: Buying your gasoline in the early morning or in the evening when it is cooler outside will save you money. Gas is moderately denser in cold temperatures.

Proponents of this money-saver say that because gas pumps measure fuel volume rather than density, you'll get more for your money if you buy fuel when it's cool outside.

Truth: "You're not going to see much difference if you fill up on a 50-degree day or if you fill up on an 80-degree day," Baxter says.

That's because at filling stations, the gas is kept underground where the temperature is fairly stable.

Following this myth can even cost you time and money. Many people fuel up on their way to or from work, so you'll end up spending more time in line, idling your engine as you wait — and wasting gas.



Quick Trips

A piece of paradise

..Ravello combines ancient villas, cobbled walks and coastal views

Directions

Take Autostrada A3, Napoli-Reggio Calabria, toward Salerno for about 28 miles, then take exit for Vietri sul Mare. Follow state roadway SS 18 toward Tirrenia Inferiore, and then SS 163 toward Amalfitana. Ravello is about 15 miles from Vietri sul Mare. Follow blue signs for Ravello.

Public transportation is available on blue SITA buses that run from Salerno to Amalfi, Amalfi to Sorrento and Amalfi to Ravello. Ferries also connect some principal towns on the coast. For times and cost, call the company, Travelmar, at (+39) 089-872-950.

Times

Villas and shops are open year-round. Popular tourist destination Villa Rufolo offers chamber music from March to October.

Costs

A portion of the highway between Naples and Ravello has a 1.40-euro toll. Parking is available on an hourly basis in a designated lot at the foot of the town entrance, or on the street. The *Circumvesuviana* local train to Sorrento, about an hour's ride, costs 3.50 euros, and a SITA bus the rest of the way costs between 1.80 and 2.20 euros. Ferry/hydrofoil prices vary depending on station and season. On average, they cost about 20 euros.

Food

Dining in Ravello is limited to about a half-dozen small Italian restaurants and pizzerias around the main square and on a few side streets.

Information

More information is available on the Internet at www.ravello.it/aziendaturismo. There is a tourist office in the main square of Piazza Duomo; phone (+39) 089-857096.

— SANDRA JONTZ

BY SANDRA JONTZ

Stars and Stripes

If there's a heaven on Earth, it might be the town of Ravello perched high on the famous Italian Amalfi Coast.

"Breathtaking."

That was the sole visitor Daniela Mazzarino, 34, could whisper one bitterly cold afternoon in January as she scanned the brilliant blue of the Mediterranean Sea while standing on the *Terrazza dell'Infinito* — the "terrace of infinity." The terrace is part of Villa Cimbrone, a landmark hotel, where in 1938, Hollywood diva Greta Garbo would rendezvous with Russian lover Leopold Stokowski.

"It's as if you're in another world," Mazzarino said after regaining a bit of composure from a dizzying spectacular perch about 1,100 feet above sea level.

The village of Ravello is a mosaic of ancient villas, cobbled narrow walkways, picturesque churches, quaint restaurants and mid- to high-priced souvenir and art shops that decorate a mountainside of the Amalfi Coast, a mountain that seems to jut out straight from the Gulf of Salerno.

It is said to have captured the imagination of composer Richard Wagner, who wrote his "Parsifal" opera here. During the summer months, the Villa Rufolo hosts Wagnerian concerts in its gardens, and from March through October, offers guests chamber music concerts.

Historians have traced the origins of Ravello to the fourth and fifth centuries, when Roman noblemen sought sanctuary from barbarians by flocking to the mountainous region along the coast. Today it has a population of about 2,000.

The drive, roughly an hour from Naval Support Activity



Stars and Stripes



PHOTOS BY SANDRA JONTZ/Stars and Stripes

The brilliant blue of the Mediterranean Sea as seen from the dizzying height of the "Terrazza dell'Infinito" ("terrace of infinity") at the Villa Cimbrone in Ravello, Italy.

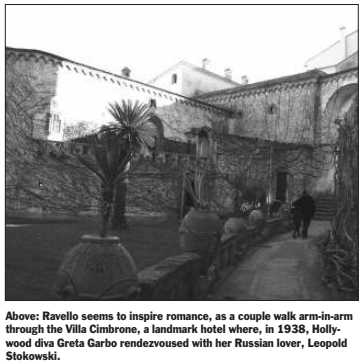


Naples, is not for those quick to get queasy.

The two-lane road presents drivers with nerve-wracking hairpin bends. Motorcyclists seem to pass with little warning at warp speeds. In the summer, the narrow roadways can get congested.

Visitors to Ravello can see Roman and medieval architecture, churches and gardens in addition to the stunning panoramas. At the village's heart is an impressive cathedral of white marble, the Duomo, built in 1086. But the ancient town is not wheelchair or stroller friendly, making many parts of the city inaccessible to those who cannot visit on foot.

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Above left: Ravello seems to inspire romance, as a couple walk arm-in-arm through the Villa Cimbrone, a landmark hotel where, in 1938, Hollywood diva Greta Garbo rendezvoused with her Russian lover, Leopold Stokowski.

Above right: A sign written in English stands as testimony to the number of tourists who visit Ravello.

OPINION

Wars take turns, and reactions affect results

BY THEODORE L. GATCHEL
The Providence (R.I.) Journal

Like the tides, the fortunes of war tend to ebb and flow over the course of a conflict. How a nation deals with the setbacks that inevitably occur in war tells much about that nation's people and whether they have what it takes to prevail over a determined enemy.

The Battle of the Bulge, in World War II, and the 1968 communist Tet offensive, in Vietnam, illustrate how two different generations of Americans dealt with such setbacks.

As Christmas 1944 approached in Europe, the Allies were generally optimistic. American forces had reached the German border, and speculation about how long the war would last was a popular pastime.

On the morning of Dec. 16, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower, the supreme commander of the Western Allies in Europe, received a letter from British Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery requesting permission to take Christmas leave. In the letter was a reminder from Montgomery of a bet made earlier that the war would be over by Christmas.

The front running through a Belgian's Ardennes Forest was a particularly quiet one.

The quiet was shattered on the same day that Eisenhower received this letter by a German attack that broke deep enough into the Allied lines to produce the "bulge" that gave the resulting battle its name. The New York Times called the setback "the worst since the end of the Philippines."

That characterization was no exaggeration. Overcoming the initial shock, the Allies eventually con-

tained the German attack and then defeated it. But doing so cost the Americans roughly 80,000 casualties, including 8,000 killed and 20,000 captured or missing.

Much of the public's attention became focused on the Belgian town of Bastogne, an important road junction that the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne Division and other units held against heavy German pressure until relieved, on Dec. 26. When the American commander answered a German ultimatum to surrender with the terse reply "Nuts," Bastogne became a symbol of heroic resistance.

Perhaps as a result, Americans managed to maintain their faith in ultimate victory. The New York Times complained about the delayed release of news from the front, and noted command problems that had let the Germans achieve surprise — but it also cautioned Americans not to second-guess Congress or the president the spot while the battle continued.

The paper also raised the possibility that the German attack might even prove to be fortuitous by having offered the Allies the chance to inflict more damage on the Germans more quickly than would otherwise have been possible. When the fighting ended, the Americans had no doubt that the Allies had won a decisive victory.

Twenty-four years after the Battle of the Bulge, Americans reacted in a very different way to a surprise enemy attack that had some remarkable similarities to the German one of 1944.

As the Vietnamese lunar New Year celebration, called Tet, approached in 1968, the overall situation appeared to be calm. The communists had agreed to a truce, and a large percentage of South Vietnamese soldiers were allowed to



GERARDO F. FORKES/Stars and Stripes

South Vietnamese troops help a wounded buddy in a street fight near the presidential palace in Saigon on Feb. 3, 1968, during the Tet Offensive.

take leave. Earlier, however, Gen. Earle Wheeler, chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff, told a Detroit audience that although steady progress was being made in Vietnam, the communists might still try something "similar to the desperate effort of the Germans in the Battle of the Bulge."

On Jan. 31, 1968, the Viet Cong and their North Vietnamese allies did just what Wheeler had feared by launching a series of attacks on cities throughout Vietnam. Overcoming the shock of having been caught off guard, South Vietnamese and allied forces recovered and went on the offensive. Much of the world's attention became riveted on a group of U.S. Marines and Vietnamese rangers who were besieged in an isolated outpost near



Courtesy of the U.S. Army

Two U.S. soldiers in the snow and dirt east of Bastogne, Belgium, man .50-caliber machine guns as they keep an eye out for German troops during the Battle of the Bulge in January 1945.

the Laotian border named Khe Sanh.

Yet instead of being regarded as a heroic stand, as Bastogne had been, Khe Sanh was characterized by most of the media as a military disaster caused by bad judgment. Interminable comparisons were made to the 1954 French defeat at a similar outpost at Dien Bien Phu, and every effort was made to cast the battle in a bad light.

Second-guessing by the media was rampant and often wrong. Peter Braestrup, Saigon bureau chief for The Washington Post during Tet, later noted, "Rarely has contemporary crisis-journalism turned out, in retrospect, to have veered so widely from reality."

In reality, the communists suffered a decisive defeat. They failed to achieve any of their military or

political goals, and the fighting destroyed whatever remained of the Viet Cong — forcing the communists to rely increasingly on regular forces from North Vietnam.

But despite that reality, many Americans came to see Tet as a defeat that produced a corresponding loss of support for the war. The cause for that misperception remains the subject of debate, but it raises an important question for today.

When a setback occurs in the war on terrorism — and such a setback is almost inevitable — will Americans react as they did in 1944, or as they did in 1968?

Marine Col. Theodore L. Gatchel (retired) is a military historian and professor of operations at the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, R.I. The views are his own and do not necessarily reflect those of the college, the Navy or the Defense Department.

Congress must ensure bill isn't morally bankrupt

BY DALE MCFEATERS
Scraps Howard

The bankruptcy bill that just passed the Senate and is assured of House passage is being described as "the most sweeping" and "most significant change" in bankruptcy laws in 27 years and as a political victory for President Bush.

A political victory for Bush and the credit-card and banking industries, yes. But as for "sweeping" and "significant," only time will tell.

A preliminary glance at the final product suggests that it is considerably more modest than "sweeping." And how controversial could a measure be that passed the fractious Senate 74-25? It would affect, according to bankruptcy experts, somewhere between 30,000 and 210,000 people a year, largely by forcing them to opt for Chapter 13 bankruptcy, where some repayment is required, rather than Chapter 7, which erases debts altogether. And it does underscore a fundamental commercial principle that good-faith loans should be repaid.

The terms of the bill are hardly Dickensian. In essence, bankruptcy filers with incomes above their state's median income and with the wherewithal that a judge determines would allow them to repay \$100 a

month over five years — a total of \$6,000 — would have to file under Chapter 13.

The bill also tightens a loophole that allowed potential bankrupts to shield their assets by buying extravagant homes in states like Florida and Texas. The "homestead exemption" has been tightened to \$125,000 for property bought within 30 months of filing.

The bill shields retirement benefits up to \$1 million, but it also ordains that child sup-

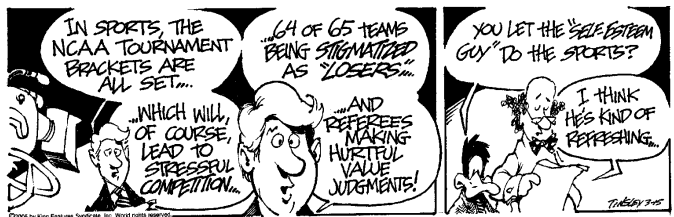
port, alimony, student loans and most tax obligations cannot be wiped out by filing for bankruptcy.

There is a large loophole for residents of states that sanction asset-protection trusts, shields trusted from the bankruptcy laws set up by people who have some expectation of being sued, such as doctors, but increasingly by executives wary of the new corporate liability laws. ...

Once having made this bankruptcy bill law, Congress has an obligation of its own. Lawmakers must be vigilant to see that the act is not an insurance policy for reckless lenders. And while Congress can't do much about [some causes of bankruptcy, such as] divorce or job loss, it can try to ensure that [another cause], severe illness, is not an automatic economic catastrophe for low- and middle-income families.

Mallard Fillmore

BY BRUCE TINSLEY



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AFRTS Television Schedule

Updated sports listings are available on the first Scoreboard page in the sports section or AFRTS's Web site at <http://myafn.dodmedia.osd.mil/>

TUESDAY, MARCH 15, 2005

(AFN-FAMILY)	(AFN-MOVIE)	(AFN-EUROPE)	(AFN-KOREA)	(AFN-NEWS)	(AFN-SPORTS)	(SPECTRUM)	(AFN-PACIFIC)
9:00 Stanley 'Woodcock' West	Movie *** 'What Makes a Family' (2001) Brooke Shields, a Jewish girl joins her late lover's parents for child custody.	Dr. Phil	Jeopardy!	Hardball	Tennis Pacific Life Open - Day 1, From Indian Wells, Calif. (Taped)	30-Minute Meals	Jeopardy!
9:30 Sages-Siemens Cat	Movie *** 'What Makes a Family' (2001) Brooke Shields, a Jewish girl joins her late lover's parents for child custody.	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Sweet Dreams	Headline News
10:00 Arthur 'What Is That Thing?'		(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Best for Less	ESPN News
10:30 Reading Rainbow (E)		(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
11:00 Sages-Siemens Cat	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
11:30 Stanley	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
12:00 Don the Explorer	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
12:30 The Wiggles	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
13:00 Bob the Builder	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
13:30 Dragon Tales (E)	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
14:00 Blue's Clues	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
14:30 Barney & Friends (E)	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
15:00 Funniest Home Videos	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
15:30 Growing Pains 'Slice of Life'	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
16:00 Pokémon 'Navel Manuevers'	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
16:30 Yu-Gi-Oh! (Part 1 of 2)	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
17:00 Doug (E)	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
17:30 The Wild Thornberrys	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
18:00 The Family OddParents	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
18:30 Rugrats	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
19:00 The Proud Family (E)	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
19:30 The Amanda Show	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
20:00 Everwood 'Daddy's Little Girl'	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
20:30 Sister, Sister	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
21:00 Sister, Sister	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
21:30 The Cosby Show	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
22:00 Home Improvement	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
22:30 Touched by an Angel 'Mona's Bad Day'	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
23:00	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report
23:30	10:40 Movie *** 'Finding Forever' (2000, Drama, F)	(9:45) Oprah Winfrey	Headline News	The O'Reilly Factor		Stripes	Pacific Report

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2005

00:00 Doug 'Doug the Dog' (E)	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
00:30 The Wild Thornberrys	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
1:00 The Family OddParents	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
1:30 Rugrats	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
2:00 The Proud Family (E)	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
2:30 The Amanda Show	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
3:00 Everwood 'Daddy's Little Girl'	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
3:30 Sister, Sister	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
4:00 Sister, Sister	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
4:30 Sister, Sister	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
5:00 Sesame Street (E)	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
5:30 The Wiggles 'Wiggle Opera'	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
6:00 Barney & Friends (E)	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
6:30 Clifford the Big Red Dog (E)	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
7:00 Dragon Tales (E)	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
7:30 Bob the Builder	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
8:00 The Wiggles 'Wiggle Opera'	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
8:30 Don the Explorer	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
9:00 Stanley 'Mockingbird Scarf'	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
9:30 Sages-Siemens Cat	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
10:00 Arthur 'My Music Rules'	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
10:30 Reading Rainbow (E)	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
11:00 Sages-Siemens Cat	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
11:30 Stanley	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
12:00 Don the Explorer	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
12:30 The Wiggles	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
13:00 Bob the Builder	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
13:30 Dragon Tales (E)	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
14:00 Blue's Clues	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
14:30 Barney & Friends (E)	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
15:00 Funniest Home Videos	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
15:30 Growing Pains	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
16:00 Pokémon 'Snack Attack'	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
16:30 Yu-Gi-Oh! (Part 2 of 2)	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
17:00 Doug 'Doug in a Pinch' (E)	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
17:30 The Wild Thornberrys	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
18:00 The Family OddParents	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
18:30 Rugrats	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
19:00 Even Stevens 'This Is Not'	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
19:30 Kenan & Kel 'Fenced In'	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
20:00 Gilmore Girls 'Dead Uncles and Vegetables'	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
20:30	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
21:00 The Depressed Next	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
21:30 The Depressed Next	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
22:00 The Cosby Show	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
22:30 Home Improvement	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
23:00 Touched by an Angel 'A Crown's Prayer'	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame
23:30	11:50 Movie *** 'Hollow Man' (2000) Kevin Bacon.	Late Show-Letterman	Play With Me Sesame	Headline News	SportsCenter	Late Night With Conan O'Brien	Play With Me Sesame



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FACES

No strings attached

Even with no guitar, British rock band Keane is winning devoted fans on both sides of the pond

BY ROSS RAIHALA

Night Rider Newspapers

The British trio Keane has experienced the sort of year most young bands would kill for, selling millions of records in Europe, winning two Brit Awards (England's answer to the Grammys), and performing to sellout crowds around the world.

But what made the group, which seems set to reach Coldplay-like heights of fame, really nervous? Appearing on "Saturday Night Live" last month alongside guest host Paris Hilton.

"It was scary, probably the most nerve-wracking thing we've had to do," said lead singer Tom Chaplin during a phone interview from Boston.

"After a year of touring, we're used to playing shows. But with something like that, the expectation is so great. The show is an institution in the States."

Keane lived up to the challenge and won over a whole new audience of fans in the process, playing their insanely melodic singles "Everybody's Changing" and "Somewhere Only We Know," a song that got its first blush of exposure in a Victoria's Secret commercial.

Soon after the "SNL" performance, Keane's debut disc, "Hopes and Fears," re-entered the Billboard Top 100, with sales headed toward the million mark.

But what about the really important stuff? What's Paris Hilton like?

"She was cool," said Chaplin. "Weirdly enough, she seemed a lot more intelligent and down to earth than she comes across."

It's a polite, mannered answer from a polite, mannered band. "Hopes and Fears" is filled with bright choruses, hummable melodies and an overall sense of nice that has earned Keane plenty of suspicious glances from rock's credibility police.

And then there's Keane's lead guitarist. Or, more ac-

curately, the lack of one.

The band formed in 1997 and kicked around unsuccessfully for years. In 2002, they lost their guitar player and figured they'd have a go without a six-string.

"It really was incredibly liberating," Chaplin said. "It forced us to try and change things up a bit. And we've found we can get the songs across in a much more clear way that suits the feel of the music much better."

Tim Rice-Oxley's pianos and synthesizers form the backbone of Keane's music, with live drummer Richard Hughes keeping the songs rooted in rock, rather than dance, music. The pared-back instrumentation also focuses attention on Chaplin's angelic, lilting vocals.

"Every guitar sound has been done to death," Chaplin said. "The piano is a blank canvas. And we've been experimenting with pedals and amps to mess things up a bit. It's really exciting."

Tom Chaplin

Lead singer

While Keane has already connected with American audiences, they're not content to remain a passing fancy in this country.

"Hopes and Fears" produced four hit singles in England, and they're, ahem, keen to replicate that success here. Chaplin said his band plans to spend much of the year touring the States.

"Whatever band you talk about, like U2 or Radiohead, there's an electricity about what they do," Chaplin said.

"They have songs that really connect with people and give them a true emotional experience. We aspire to that, and we're willing to

AP/WIDE WORLD

British rock group Keane has made an impact on the American music charts after appearing on "Saturday Night Live." Lead singer Tom Chaplin, right, said appearing on "SNL" was "nerve-wracking."

Swank fights New Zealand customs fine

Hilary Swank, the Oscar-winning star of fight flick "Million Dollar Baby," is in a tussle with New Zealand authorities over a \$150 fine for bringing fruit into the country, local media reported Sunday.

Swank was fined in January for failing to declare an apple and an orange in her luggage when she arrived at Auckland International Airport, The Sunday Star-Times newspaper reported.

"It's a pretty standard practice to issue an instant fine for a biosecurity risk," said Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry spokesman William Minchin.

Thousands of visitors arriving in New Zealand each year are fined on the spot for not declaring products such as fruit, which cannot be imported into New Zealand, and hundreds contest the fines, Minchin said.

New Zealand is largely free of pests, which cause billions of dollars in damage to crops and livestock in other parts of the world and has strict quarantine guidelines.

Swank has instructed lawyers to appear in court next week to contest the fine, the paper reported.



Swank

Sampras, wife expecting second child

Former tennis star Pete Sampras and his wife are expecting a second child.

Sampras and actress Bridgette Wilson-Sampras are due to have the child this fall, their publicist, Deborah Grimes, said in a statement.

The couple married in September 2000. Their son, Christian Sampras, is 2.

In 1990, Sampras beat rival Andre Agassi in the final to become, at 19, the youngest champion in tournament history.

Sampras retired from the tournament circuit after beating Agassi at the 2002 U.S. Open. Then 31, Sampras became the tournament's oldest winner since 1970.

Brooks takes care of his fan

One Garth Brooks fan who spent \$1,200 to buy a guitar signed by the country singer — only to find out it was a fake — has received an authentic signature.

Toby Bradley, 34, a long-haul trucker, put the guitar up for auction on eBay in January hoping to raise \$50,000 for victims of the South Asian tsunami.

Brooks' attorney saw the eBay listing and asked Bradley to send it to him so the signature could be verified. It turned out to be fake, but Brooks signed the guitar and

sent it back to Bradley.

"I appreciate that they made it authentic," Bradley said in a telephone interview with the Yakima Herald-Republic.

He said he was disappointed that he had not talked directly to Brooks, but still thinks Brooks is the greatest entertainer of all time.

Perlman to pay fine for contribution

Actress Rhea Perlman has agreed to a fine against the DeVito Family Trust for failing to file a major donor report on a \$10,000 contribution to Californians for Schwarzenegger in 2003.

The state's Fair Political Practices Commission said it would fine the trust \$400 for failing to disclose political donations during the 2003 gubernatorial recall campaign that put Arnold Schwarzenegger in office.

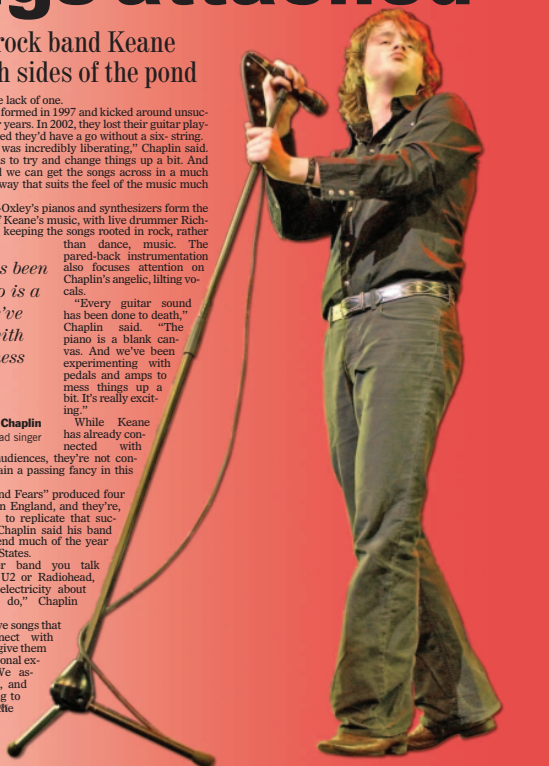
Perlman, who is married to actor and director Danny DeVito, agreed to the fine in January on behalf of the trust.

Perlman could not be reached for comment.

Stories and photos from The Associated Press

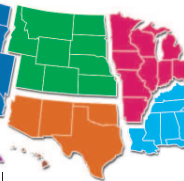


Perlman



Special treatment

AR LITTLE ROCK — Patients traveling to Arkansas for medical treatment will receive assistance under a program announced at the Little Rock National Airport. The patients will be provided with language translation if they need it, as well as help with baggage and transportation to hotels and hospitals, officials said.



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Kindergarten optional

NH CONCORD — The state Board of Education dropped a plan to require all school districts to offer kindergarten by 2007. Lawmakers said the rule would usurp their authority and force a state program on local districts. New Hampshire is the last state without universal kindergarten; about 15 communities don't offer it.

Limiting cold medicine

MN ST. PAUL — The Minnesota Legislature unanimously passed a bill restricting the sale of cold medicines containing ingredients used to make methamphetamine.

The bill would require Sufadine and Acetaminophen to be kept behind pharmacy counters.

Customers would have to sign for the drugs and would be allowed to buy only two packages at a time.

Fishing-season dispute

FL MADEIRA BEACH — Friends and family of a missing commercial fisherman say a two-week gap between the seasons for amberjack and grouper created an atmosphere in which fishermen felt a need to take more risks.

Friends say the restrictions cost Michael Costello and a crewman their lives. Restrictions are aimed at replenishing dwindling stocks in the Gulf of Mexico.

Obscenity case dropped

KS ABILENE — An obscenity case brought against the Lions' Den Adult Superstore has been dismissed for technical reasons. A Dickinson County grand jury returned a 29-count indictment alleging the store promoted obscenity, but a judge ruled the petition was improperly filled out.

New bishop named

VT BURLINGTON — Monsignor Salvatore Matano, a longtime Rhode Island priest who has worked the last four years at the Vatican's Washington office, was selected by Pope John Paul II to be Vermont's new bishop. He will take over in August.

Budget unbalanced

WA OLYMPIA — Some state lawmakers want to borrow against future payments from a tobacco settlement to help balance the budget. Gov. Christine Gregoire, who negotiated the deal when she was attorney general, is against that.

The settlement is expected to bring the state \$4 billion over the next 25 years for health services.

Boaters sue state

HI HONOLULU — An organization of boaters who faced eviction from the Ala Wai Harbor

is suing the state.

The mariners who live aboard their vessels allege they were improperly evicted from the short-term boat slips at the harbor under a proposed deal between the state and the Waikiki Yacht Club.

The group calls itself the "Displaced Boaters of Ala Wai Harbor."

Group spokesman Jai Lohmeyer said he knew the boat slips were not permanent, but he believes the state should have given more notice to move.

In February, the state gave about a dozen boaters three days to vacate their slips. Eight of the boaters have sued seeking to stay put, and a judge issued a preliminary injunction stopping the evictions until the case is resolved.

City opens rat school

NY NEW YORK — The city has a new weapon in its never-ending battle against rats: a federally funded institute to teach the craft of rodent eradication.

Plans for the Rodent Integrated Pest Control Academy were announced in a hearing before the City Council's health committee. The academy will train exterminators from the Health Department and other city agencies, said Edgar Butts, an assistant Health Department commissioner.

A three-year, \$600,000 grant



Nap time

One of Jeff King's dogs takes a rest during the Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race at the Grayling, Alaska, checkpoint.

from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention will fund the school, for which a coordinator has yet to be appointed. Among the skills taught will be the proper placement of rat poison.

Shaken baby bill

TX HOUSTON — The deaths of four Texas infants within one week could intensify efforts to approve legislation to educate parents about shaken baby syndrome.

Police in Houston are investigating the deaths of an 8-month-old girl, a 5-month-old boy and a 7-month-old boy. Investigators think their injuries may stem from being shaken aggressively.

In Austin, the father of a 5-month-old boy who died was arrested after being accused of shaking the child to death.

"I think we are going to continue, unfortunately, to have this problem," said state Sen. Eddie Lucio Jr., D-Brownsville. "But the more we educate people, the more we train people to do the right thing with their child as they leave the hospital, obviously the better it will be."

Jailer plays a prank

AR PARAGOULD — A jailer gave a laxative to an inmate who had requested cold medicine, then taunted the man as he suffered severe diarrhea, authorities said.

Johnnie Dallas Pruett, 27, was fired and charged with battery in the March 1 incident involving 19-year-old Darryl R. Bartlett.

Sheriff's Capt. Jamie Martin said after Bartlett asked for cold medicine, Pruett brought him three pink pills and a cup of water. The inmate took the pills, and Pruett began laughing and showed him a box of over-the-counter laxative pills.

Bartlett said that after 90 minutes, he developed severe stomach pains, vomited and had severe diarrhea. He said Pruett taunted him throughout the night and asked if he needed a diaper.

Film scene nearly deadly

GA SAVANNAH — A college student was seriously injured while acting out a hanging for a film project.

Daryl Goins and other students were making a movie for class at his home. The script had class as a hanging by a professor, but Goins, 20, allegedly decided to change the ending.

"There was a suicide scene at the end, and he changed the technique," Geoffrey Jowett, dean of students for Savannah College of Art and Design, told the Savannah Morning News. "It was a hanging, an accident based on the stunt."

Details were sketchy, but during the scene Goins somehow hit his head. Jowett said other students gave him CPR. He was hospitalized in serious condition.

Police have the video and are investigating. The school is reviewing whether to pursue disciplinary action.

Goins was enrolled in an Introduction to Video class. Students at the college are required to take a safety course before filming, sign a contract confining them, have read all safety regulations and have scripts approved by a faculty member.



Becoming an American

Nguyen Ngo, of Vietnam, awaits the start of a swearing-in ceremony at the Bush presidential library in College Station, Texas. Nearly 50 U.S. servicemen were sworn in as U.S. citizens.



Colorful block party

Wil Flores, right, and Belisario Loza start at one of the many vendors at the annual "Calle Ocho" block party in the Little Havana area of Miami. The event marks the end of the carnival festivities.



A fine, feathered friend

Paige, a 10-year-old bald eagle, poses for visitors, in background from left, Debbie LaFreniere and Sharon Bostrom at the Florida Audubon Birds of Prey Center in Maitland, Fla. The center is celebrating its 25th year with an open house.



Fire-breather Daniel Echeverria, 44, poses next to his fire-breathing motorcycle in Daytona Beach, Fla. Echeverria said he spent three years building the bike named Excalibur by hand in his barn in Argentina. Echeverria shipped his creation to Florida for Bike Week.



Luck o' the Irish Melanie Weimer of Scottdale, Pa., dresses as a leprechaun while marching in the St. Patrick's Day Parade in downtown Pittsburgh.



Enjoying spring break Crystal Stevenson, 22, from the University of Indiana, relaxes on the beach at South Padre Island, Texas, while Tony Bickenstaff, 24, from Eastern Illinois University, applies suntan lotion during the annual college spring break.

Guilty plea in murder

NJ CAMDEN — A second man pleaded guilty to the murder of a woman who was abducted from a park-and-ride lot on her way home from work in 2001. Marcus Toliver, 27, admitted killing Christine Eberle, 27, an accountant who lived in Washington Township and worked in Philadelphia. He agreed to the same 43-year prison sentence handed by Rysheane Thomas, 26, who pleaded guilty in January.

More training for nurses

AR LITTLE ROCK — University of Arkansas athletic director Frank Broyles persuaded legislators to back a bill that would expand training for certified nurses aides in caring for Alzheimer's patients. The Senate committee endorsed the measure, which has passed in the House. Broyles told the panel of his grief during the years he cared for his wife, Barbara, who died last fall after battling Alzheimer's.

Hospital closing

PA PHILADELPHIA — Women's Medical Hospital in Philadelphia is closing its doors. There isn't enough patient revenue to support and maintain the operation of the 50-bed acute-care facility, said Dr. Nancy Pickering, chief executive officer. In recent years, the 500 employees endured hospital name changes, cutbacks, the collapse of the Allegheny Health System in 1998 and the threatened closure by the former owner, Tenet Healthcare.

Art law repealed

SD PIERRE — A 16-year-old law requiring state funding for works of art in new public buildings and those being remodeled will be repealed under legislation signed by Gov. Mike Rounds. The 1989 law said the Legislature must set aside an art allowance equal to 1 percent of the cost of those projects. The stipulation was never followed.

End of streetcar line?

WA SEATTLE — The city may shut down its waterfront streetcar line so the Seattle Art Museum can build a sculpture park at the north end of the line where its maintenance barn is located. The streetcar is a popular tourist attraction that carries 400,000 people a year. It runs between Myrtle Edwards Park and Pioneer Square.

City Council recall

OK McALESTER — Petitions seeking the recall of City Council members Michael Dawkins and Louis Snitherman were turned in to the city clerk. They served on the council when contracts and budgets with leave buyback provisions for former City Manager Randy Green were approved. Green received \$579,500 for unused leave over a five-year period. The FBI is investigating the case.

Backup budget

TN NASHVILLE — A backup budget plan released by Gov. Phil Bredesen would either slash education spending by \$268 million or end pharmacy benefits for people in the state public health care program. The alternative budget is on the table in case Bredesen's primary plan, which presupposes savings through cuts in the TennCare program, is held up in court.

Wrong number

WI MADISON — When the state's Division of Motor Vehicles sent notices to 25,000 motorists to renew their registration, they made a tiny mistake.

The telephone number printed on the postcards was one digit off and instead connected callers to "the nation's most informative psychic connection service, helping you with love, money, health and romantic encounters."

The Division of Motor Vehicles spent \$1,500 sending letters to truckers after someone called about the typo, said Jane Zarada, director of the state Bureau of Vehicle Services.

Golden Gate suicides

CA SAN FRANCISCO — A proposal to study a suicide barrier on the Golden Gate Bridge is expected to get the go-ahead despite mixed reactions from the public and serious questions over finances.

The 19 bridge district directors will be asked to take the first step and commit \$2 million toward environmental studies and preliminary design work.

In addition to that \$2 million, \$15 million to \$25 million will be needed to build a barrier, so the money question will probably be a major part of the discussion.

An estimated 1,300 people have jumped from the bridge to their deaths since it was built in 1937, giving the West's signature span additional renown as the top suicide landmark in the world.

Fortunate to be alive

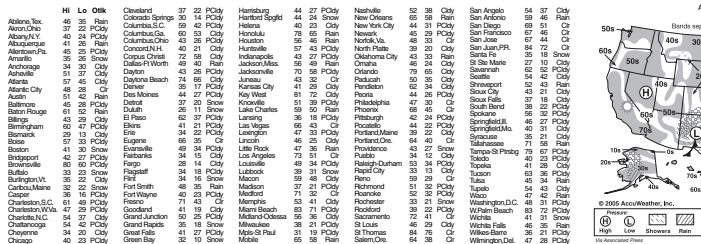
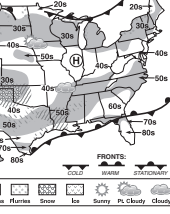
TN TOWNSEND — Four college freshmen got on a spring-break excursion to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park said that they felt lucky to be alive after they were snowed in at a shelter on the Appalachian Trail.

Matthew Schultz, 19, Fran Saldarriaga, 19, Ryan McCall, 19, and Bryan Hendrick, 19, were rescued by park rangers and a National Guard helicopter after spending two wet, freezing nights huddled in a trail shelter.

Schultz was airlifted to the University of Tennessee Medical Center in Knoxville as a precautionary measure after falling victim to hypothermia. His three companions walked off the trail a few hours later with words of warning for anyone planning a trip into the mountains.

"We weren't prepared," Hendrick said. "We may have done a few things right, but we did a lot of things wrong. We were lucky."

Stories and photos from wire services



Horoscope

In these final days of the sun's visit in Pisces, a solar cycle through the zodiac ends. The wrapping-up process causes us to account for the good, bad and ugly of the last 12 months. Flashes of extreme emotion swing the mood like a wild pendulum. As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "Our life is March weather, savage and serene in one hour."

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (March 15). You're destined for success. This year proves to you that your hard work and wishing have all been for a purpose. Surprising turns in the next 10 weeks cause you to act quickly or miss out. Getting enough sleep, food and exercise allows you to stay mentally and physically nimble. Love requires sacrifice in May. Lucky signs are Leo and Taurus.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). You're usually goal-oriented, so days like today, when you feel sort of lost and restless, are quite out of character. Here's a hint: Sometimes, the "goal" is unconscious. You're already working toward it without realizing what it is.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). Explorations of the higher mind bring you closer to happiness. The quest for knowledge is an ongoing one, though. With all your research and study, you may find there is no explanation that can satisfy you.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). Public relations do matter. Put energy there. You're so used to your work that it no longer seems impressive to you. Though it's hardly the sort of thing you boast about, someone else does and is promoted as a result.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). It would be nice to be left in your own little corner of the world to do your thing. But that's just not the way it works. Getting along with difficult people will be the difference between success and failure.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). There's a time to extend your arms and a time to retract them, hugging your

own soul. You're comforted by pulling back — delve deeper into your own reality, and you'll find the elation you've been seeking through external means.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). Moral and ethical issues arise. If you can't get involved in what the group is doing, it may be because it's inherently wrong. An honest man doesn't really have a knack for that sort of activity.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You have a long list of unfinished business. The good news is that much of it doesn't have to be accomplished by you. Let loved ones know that if they're going to be hanging out with you, they should expect to be put to work.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Some mysterious inspires you to activate your shadow engine. Everyone has something to hide, though the secrets you uncover may not be as deep and dark as your imagination wants them to be.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). You can still win, but you must be persuasive to do it. Getting people to think like you is impossible. So try and come to a consensus with the people you're pretty much stuck with.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). It's a bird, it's a plane, it's ... your imagination. Unfortunately, no one is coming to rescue you out of your current precarious position. So you must rely on your own super skills.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Loved ones who have been recently neglected will act out. Consider that there is probably a better way to balance your time. Rework your schedule. Remember, the excellent things in this world must be fought for.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). Once again, it's clear that your happiness depends on being able to connect in agreement with two or three special people. As John Lennon once said, "A dream you dream alone is only a dream. A dream you dream together is reality."

Creators Syndicate

Holiday Mathis



Calvin and Hobbes

I WONDER WHY PEOPLE ARE NEVER CONTENT WITH WHAT THEY HAVE.



ARE YOU KIDDING? YOUR FINGERPAINTS HAVE A ZING. YOU'VE GOT NO FRIGID, YOU CAN'T SEE IN THE NIGHT, YOUR PINK HIGGS ARE REDUCED, YOUR REFLEXES ARE NUL, AND YOU YOURSELF EVEN HAVE TALKS OF COURSE. PEOPLE AREN'T CONTENT?

I FORGOT I SAID ANYTHING.

WELL IF THERE WEREN'T CONTENT, THAT WOULD BE SOMETHING TO WONDER ABOUT.

Jump Start

OUR TWINS ARE FRATERNAL! A BOY AND A GIRL!!

SUNNY AND JOJO WILL HAVE A NEW BROTHER AND A SISTER!

I AM THE HAPPIEST, LUCKIEST GUY IN THE WHOLE WIDE WORLD!

SO WHEN DO YOU GO IN FOR YOUR "PROCEDURE"?

Zits

WE HAVE A SUBSTITUTE ELEGANT TEACHER, AND HERE'S A SERK!

HERE'S YOUR REGULAR TEACHER?

HUH?

OH, HER APPOINTMENT WASN'T HERE, AND HER CAR WAS STOLEN WHILE SHE WAS AT HER UNCLE'S HOUSE. SO SHE'LL BE GONE UNTIL NEXT WEEK.

Cathy

THAT SIDE OF MY COUCH WAS ALWAYS BUSY MY SPOT.

BUT THIS SIDE OF MY COUCH IS MY SPOT.

GUH! I CAN'T HAVE MY COUCH HERE, IT WOULD BE MY SPOT!

MY SPOT!

Hi and Lois

MY GREAT-GRANDFATHER USED TO DO HIS ROUNDS IN A HORSE-DRAWN WAGON!

WAS HE IN THE SAME BUSINESS?

ARE YOU KIDDING? ALOYSIUS ABERCROMBIE IS IN THE GARAGE MEN'S HALL OF FAME!

Beetle Bailey

I HEAR REVEILLE, OTTO! TIME TO GET UP!

I DIDN'T HEAR ANY BUGLE.

IT'S CALLING OTTO TO BREAKFAST. GURGLE RUMBLE. OH, STOMACH REVEILLE.

Red Rover

UP AND AT 'EM, LAZ BONES! SQUIRREL-CHASING SEASON IS ONLY A FEW SHOTS' WEEENS AWAY!

TIME TO GET YOU INTO SHAPE!

WE'LL START WITH A FEW OF THE BRICKS OUT BACK.

AND HE WONDER WHY HE DIDN'T HAVE ALL SNAKES LAST YEAR.

Better or Worse

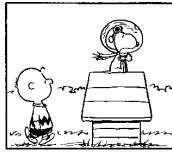
WHAT WILL IT BE ON THE WAY HOME FROM JACK O' LANTERN?

CAN HE GO DOWN YONDER FOREVER?

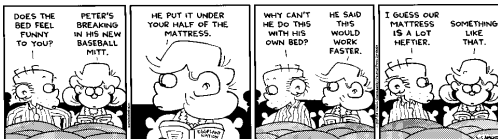
DEE, THE GUY IN THE NEXT CAR ARE CHECKING YOU ARE A KID!

NOW YOU KNOW! YOU ARE A KID! YOU'RE ONLY 15, RIGHT? I REALLY NEEDED THAT!

Peanuts



Fotrot



B.C.



Baby Blues



Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



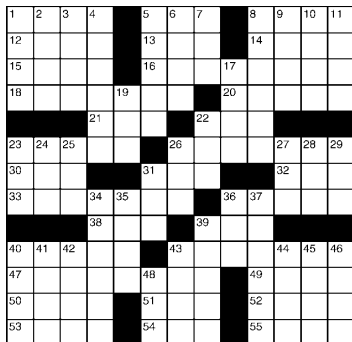
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 Desire
- 5 Barbie's ex
- 8 Karate school
- 12 Wan
- 13 Paul Bunyan prop
- 14 Carbon compound
- 15 Turn on a pivot
- 16 Longfellow subject
- 18 League championship
- 20 O. Henry's specialty
- 21 Billboards
- 22 Colony dweller
- 23 Low voice
- 26 Snobbish
- 30 Literary collection
- 31 Comic DeLuise
- 32 Sapporo sash
- 33 Fireplug
- 36 Leonard Marx
- 38 Mound stat
- 39 Ovine comment
- 40 Savory jelly
- 43 Personnel Dept. actions
- 47 Intensity
- 49 Caffeine-rich nut
- 50 Square
- 51 Marry
- 52 Works with
- 53 Disarray
- 54 Chowderhead
- 55 Witnesses

Down

- 1 Nasty stinger
- 2 Capri, e.g.
- 3 Avoid
- 4 Laughing pack
- 5 Madeline and Gus
- 6 Egress
- 7 PBS benefactor
- 8 Scarcity
- 9 Aware of
- 10 Revelation writer
- 11 Moisturizer name
- 17 KFC piece
- 19 Commotion
- 22 Intention
- 23 "Humbly!"
- 24 Whatever amount
- 25 Despondent
- 26 Stolen
- 27 Polli preceder
- 28 Regis and Kelly's network
- 29 Uncle (Sp.)
- 31 "CSI" evidence
- 34 Holds the scepter
- 35 St. Louis attraction
- 36 Ford or Lincoln
- 37 17-syllable verses
- 39 Constricts
- 40 Attention getter
- 41 Gopher Ballesteros
- 42 Slapstick arsenal
- 43 Doctor's revenue
- 44 Winning margin, maybe
- 45 Merriment
- 46 Back talk
- 48 Airline initials

Answer to Previous Puzzle



3-15

CRYPTOQUIP

Z ZDHQZEM VGHV H LBYYX
NMVSMME H LHEEYE HEK
H NMRR SYIRK NM KINNMK

"VGM NYDDBHEQ."
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: ONE OF MY COMPUTER KEYS APPEARS TO BE STICKING, BUT I CAN'T PUT MY FINGER ON IT.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: N equals B

Help dealing with gay daughter

Dear Abby: In 2000, I won full custody of my two children, a boy, 12, and a girl, "Dallas," who is now 14.

I have done everything I could to raise them both with good morals and provide them with a good education.

A few weeks ago, Dallas confessed to me that she's attracted to girls, and has a long-distance relationship with a girl in a different state. It came as a shock, but I have decided to understand what she doesn't feel bad about it. I'm hoping this is just a phase she's going through and that it will pass — but if it doesn't, I'll do my best to deal with it.

My problem is that Dallas insists on letting everyone know about her orientation. She even wears jewelry with the rainbow colors. I keep trying to make her understand that this is HER business, and it's not something she should make public, but she responds by asking me if I'm

ashamed of her. (I always reply, "Of course not.") Am I wrong by telling her that? What's the correct way to deal with this?

— **Confused Parent,** Arlington, Va.

Dear Confused: It is a compliment to you that your daughter trusts you enough to be open with you about her sexual orientation. Many gay teens — and younger children — are so afraid they'll disappoint their parents by disclosing they are "different" that they don't talk about it.

What your daughter needs right now is to know that you love and approve of her. You must be doing some other thing, because she is assured enough about who she is that she feels safe being open about it.

It is extremely important that you come to terms with your own feelings about homosexuality. It is not uncommon for the parents of a gay child to feel guilt or shame, when in truth, it has

nothing to do with the quality of their parenting and everything to do with genetics.

Your wisest move at this point would be to contact PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays), and join one of its many support groups. Once you do, you will find it enormously helpful. Contact it by calling (202) 467-8180, or check the Web site at www.pflag.org.

I have recently learned about another helpful resource for parents of younger children who exhibit gender-variant behavior and interests. It's the Children's National Medical Center, which offers a booklet titled "If You Are Concerned About Your Child's Gender Behaviors." It can be downloaded from www.dchilrens.com/gendervariance in either English or Spanish. It also is ordered by writing CNMC, 111 Michigan Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20010.

Letters for this column — with your name and phone number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 6940, Los Angeles, CA 90069. Readers can write to Abby on the Internet at <http://www.uepress.com/dearabby>. Universal Press Syndicate

JUMBLE

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Arnold and Mike Argrison

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

LUTIG

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BROIT

SUNGUF

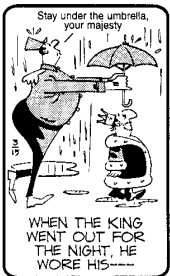
KENRAT

www.jumble.com

A: " " " "

Yesterday's Jumbles: BROOK COLON FABRIC UTMOST

Answer: Where the band ended up when their concert fizzled — AT "ROCK" BOTTOM



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Ask ex about meeting adult son

Dear Annie: Many years ago, I was married and had a son, "Linus."

That marriage fell apart, and later, I remarried. Linus was then 4 years old. At that time, my ex-wife asked if she and her new husband could adopt Linus. My wife and I were expecting a baby, we didn't have much money, and I consented to the adoption because I knew my new family needed the child support money. It was a painful decision, but I thought it was the right one.

In the past 13 years, I have come to regret my choice. I've had no contact with Linus since the adoption. He recently turned 18, and I would like to renew our relationship, but I don't know how. I have no idea what his mother has told him over the years. How should I approach this?

— **Absent Dad**

Dear Dad: It's possible Linus

Annie's Mailbox



has no clue about his adoption. You should contact your ex-wife and ask if your son would be interested in meeting you. It would be best if she would facilitate the contact.

However, if she refuses, you can approach Linus on your own. He is an adult now and entitled to this information.

Start with a letter or phone call, explaining briefly that you regret missing out on his life and would like to get to know him. Any further contact, however, is up to him.

Dear Annie: I have been married to "Dean" for 10 years. Two years ago, he needed surgery to remove his wedding ring because of swelling.

When he recovered, I tried to replace the ring, but he told me he didn't want to wear it anymore.

I'm sure he isn't cheating, and

I know he loves me, but this is breaking my heart. I have cried and begged, but he won't budge. I have become so resentful that it is affecting the way I feel about him. Am I being overensitive? It's been two years, and it still hurts as much today as it did then.

— **Still Brewing in Michigan**
Dear Michigan: Dean probably doesn't want to wear a ring because he fears he'll need surgery again. The swelling must have been quite painful. Since you know he loves you, and you are certain he isn't cheating, stop fussing over this. You are focusing too much attention on something that doesn't have to be so important. It's just jewelry.

What counts is the commitment behind it — and you have that.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of Annie's Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to annie@mailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045.

Creators Syndicate

Family Circus



3-15

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www.familycircus.com

"A lot of the poems Mommy likes don't even rhyme!"

GRAFFITI



Dennis the Menace



© Gary Larson

The Far Side



Non Sequitur



SCOREBOARD

AFTN TV & Radio

Tuesday

AFTN-Sports, 6:30 a.m. Daily basketball: Jani Fast (slam) Pump, Three-Point, and Double Time (FIM) (C) 10
AFTN-Sports, 7:30 a.m. College basketball: North Carolina vs. Tennessee (C) 10
AFTN-Sports, 2:30 p.m. NBA: Milwaukee at Miami (C) 10
AFTN-Sports, 6 p.m. Outdoors: Walt-Mart Florida (C) 10
AFTN-Sports, 7 p.m. Baseball: Spring Training: L.A. Angels vs. Chicago White Sox.

Wednesday

AFTN-Sports and Radio, 6:30 a.m. College basketball: NCAA Tournament: Play-in game, Oklahoma vs. Tennessee (C) 10
AFTN-Atlantic, 1 a.m. College basketball: NIT first-round game
AFTN-Sports, 3 a.m. Motor racing: Champagny-Off-Road Racing: Topaca Rovers 2 and 3 (C) 10
AFTN-Sports, 6:30 a.m. Outdoors: Babe Winters' Good Friday (C) 10
AFTN-Sports, noon-NBA: Minnesota at Dallas (C) 10
AFTN-Sports, 5:30 p.m. Auto racing: Nextel Cup: Duane Carter Chrysler 400 (C) 10
AFTN-Sports, 9 p.m. Tennis: Pacific Coast Open: Women's quarterfinals (C) 10

All times are Central European Time due to indicators displayed abroad. All listings are subject to change. Visit www.mysat.net for more information.

Baseball

Spring training games

AMERICAN LEAGUE

	W	L	PCT
Cleveland	8	7	.727
Toronto	4	7	.400
Los Angeles	4	7	.400
Tampa Bay	4	7	.400
Baltimore	4	7	.400
Minnesota	4	7	.400
Kansas City	4	7	.400
Oakland	4	7	.400
Seattle	4	7	.400

NATIONAL LEAGUE

	W	L	PCT
St. Louis	8	4	.700
Colorado	8	4	.700
San Francisco	8	4	.700
Milwaukee	8	4	.700
Pittsburgh	8	4	.700
New York	8	4	.700
Washington	8	4	.700
Arizona	8	4	.700
Los Angeles	8	4	.700
Pittsburgh	8	4	.700
San Diego	8	4	.700
Houston	8	4	.700
Seattle	8	4	.700

Spring split-squad games against non-major league teams do not.

Sunday's games

N.Y. Mets 7, Detroit 1
Minnesota 4, Boston 2
N.Y. Yankees 8, Houston 2
L.A. Dodgers 7, Florida 2
Cleveland 10, Cincinnati 1
St. Louis 5, Tampa Bay 4
St. Louis (5), Atlanta 3
Philadelphia 1, Baltimore 4
Philadelphia 9, Pittsburgh 7
St. Louis (5), St. Louis (5) 3
Seattle 3, Texas 6
St. Louis (5), Chicago Cubs 2
San Diego 5, Oakland (5) 1
San Diego 8, Oakland 5
Chicago White Sox 9, Colorado 8
Boston (5), Arizona (5) 3
Kansas City 3, San Francisco 3, tie in innings

Monday's games

Florida vs. Minnesota at Fort Myers, Fla.
Los Angeles vs. St. Louis at Jupiter, Fla.
Boston, Baltimore at Tampa Bay, St. Petersburg, Fla.
St. Louis vs. Cleveland at Winter Haven, Fla.
Toronto vs. Washington at Viera, Fla.
Dodgers vs. Philadelphia at Clearwater, Fla.
Baltimore vs. Cincinnati (5) at Sarasota, Fla.
Texas vs. L.A. Angels at Tempe, Ariz.
San Diego, Arizona at Tucson, Ariz.
Seattle (5) vs. Chicago at Peoria, Ariz.
San Diego (5) vs. San Diego at San Diego, Calif.
Seattle (5) vs. Kansas City at Surprise, Ariz.
Cincinnati (5) vs. Detroit (5) at Lakeland, Fla.
Pittsburgh vs. N.Y. Yankees at Tampa, Fla.

Auto racing

UAW-DaimlerChrysler 400

NASCAR Nextel Cup

At Las Vegas Motor Speedway

Las Vegas

Lap length: 1.94 miles

(Start position in parentheses)

1. (9) Jimmie Johnson, Ford, 542.068 mi.

2. (5) Kurt Busch, Chevrolet, 247.840 mi.

3. (1) Jeff Gordon, Chevrolet, 267.537 mi.

(5) Kevin Harvick, Chevrolet, 267.537 mi.
 (4) Greg Biffle, Ford, 267.537 mi.
 (15) Casey Mears, Dodge, 267.537 mi.
 (6) Matt Kenseth, Ford, 267.537 mi.
 (12) Tony Stewart, Chevrolet, 267.537 mi.
 (10) Bobby Hamilton Jr., Chevrolet, 267.537 mi.
 (13) Rusty Wallace, Dodge, 267.537 mi.
 (25) Dale Blaney, Chevrolet, 267.537 mi.
 (10) Carl Edwards, Ford, 267.537 mi.
 (15) Matt Kenseth, Ford, 267.537 mi.
 (12) Jeff Green, Dodge, 267.537 mi.
 (18) Mike Bliss, Chevrolet, 267.537 mi.
 (13) Scott Speed, Ford, 267.537 mi.
 (12) John Nemechek, Chevrolet, 267.537 mi.
 (20) Jeremy Mayfield, Dodge, 267.537 mi.
 (16) Michael Waltrip, Chevrolet, 267.537 mi.
 (13) Jason Leffler, Chevrolet, 267.537 mi.
 (22) Jeff Green, Dodge, 267.537 mi.
 (30) Mike Wallace, Chevrolet, 267.537 mi.
 (35) Kyle Petty, Dodge, 267.537 mi.
 (16) Travis Kvieci, Dodge, 267.537 mi.
 (13) Scott Speed, Ford, 267.537 mi.
 (12) John Nemechek, Chevrolet, 267.537 mi.
 (20) Jeremy Mayfield, Dodge, 267.537 mi.
 (16) Michael Waltrip, Chevrolet, 267.537 mi.
 (13) Jason Leffler, Chevrolet, 267.537 mi.
 (22) Jeff Green, Dodge, 267.537 mi.
 (30) Mike Wallace, Chevrolet, 267.537 mi.
 (35) Kyle Petty, Dodge, 267.537 mi.

SBC Classic

At Valencia Country Club

Purse: \$1.5 million

Final Round

1. (1) Tiger Woods, 68-69-71-72=282

2. (1) Phil Mickelthorn, 69-71-72-73=285

3. (1) Fred Couples, 70-71-72-73=286

4. (1) Greg Biffle, 71-72-73-74=288

5. (1) Casey Mears, 72-73-74-75=290

6. (1) Matt Kenseth, 73-74-75-76=292

7. (1) Tony Stewart, 74-75-76-77=294

8. (1) Bobby Hamilton Jr., 75-76-77-78=296

9. (1) Rusty Wallace, 76-77-78-79=298

10. (1) Dale Blaney, 77-78-79-80=300

11. (1) Carl Edwards, 78-79-80-81=302

12. (1) John Nemechek, 79-80-81-82=304

13. (1) Jason Leffler, 80-81-82-83=306

14. (1) Jeff Green, 81-82-83-84=308

15. (1) Mike Wallace, 82-83-84-85=310

16. (1) Kyle Petty, 83-84-85-86=312

17. (1) Travis Kvieci, 84-85-86-87=314

18. (1) Scott Speed, 85-86-87-88=316

19. (1) John Nemechek, 86-87-88-89=318

20. (1) Jeremy Mayfield, 87-88-89-90=320

21. (1) Michael Waltrip, 88-89-90-91=322

22. (1) Jason Leffler, 89-90-91-92=324

23. (1) Jeff Green, 90-91-92-93=326

24. (1) Mike Wallace, 91-92-93-94=328

25. (1) Kyle Petty, 92-93-94-95=330

26. (1) Travis Kvieci, 93-94-95-96=332

27. (1) Scott Speed, 94-95-96-97=334

28. (1) John Nemechek, 95-96-97-98=336

29. (1) Jeremy Mayfield, 96-97-98-99=338

30. (1) Michael Waltrip, 97-98-99-100=340

31. (1) Jason Leffler, 98-99-100-101=342

32. (1) Jeff Green, 99-100-101-102=344

33. (1) Mike Wallace, 100-101-102-103=346

34. (1) Kyle Petty, 101-102-103-104=348

35. (1) Travis Kvieci, 102-103-104-105=350

36. (1) Scott Speed, 103-104-105-106=352

37. (1) John Nemechek, 104-105-106-107=354

38. (1) Jeremy Mayfield, 105-106-107-108=356

39. (1) Michael Waltrip, 106-107-108-109=358

40. (1) Jason Leffler, 107-108-109-110=360

41. (1) Jeff Green, 108-109-110-111=362

42. (1) Mike Wallace, 109-110-111-112=364

43. (1) Kyle Petty, 110-111-112-113=366

44. (1) Travis Kvieci, 111-112-113-114=368

45. (1) Scott Speed, 112-113-114-115=370

46. (1) John Nemechek, 113-114-115-116=372

47. (1) Jeremy Mayfield, 114-115-116-117=374

48. (1) Michael Waltrip, 115-116-117-118=376

49. (1) Jason Leffler, 116-117-118-119=378

50. (1) Jeff Green, 117-118-119-120=380

51. (1) Mike Wallace, 118-119-120-121=382

52. (1) Kyle Petty, 119-120-121-122=384

53. (1) Travis Kvieci, 120-121-122-123=386

54. (1) Scott Speed, 121-122-123-124=388

55. (1) John Nemechek, 122-123-124-125=390

56. (1) Jeremy Mayfield, 123-124-125-126=392

57. (1) Michael Waltrip, 124-125-126-127=394

58. (1) Jason Leffler, 125-126-127-128=396

59. (1) Jeff Green, 126-127-128-129=398

60. (1) Mike Wallace, 127-128-129-130=400

61. (1) Kyle Petty, 128-129-130-131=402

62. (1) Travis Kvieci, 129-130-131-132=404

63. (1) Scott Speed, 130-131-132-133=406

64. (1) John Nemechek, 131-132-133-134=408

65. (1) Jeremy Mayfield, 132-133-134-135=410

66. (1) Michael Waltrip, 133-134-135-136=412

67. (1) Jason Leffler, 134-135-136-137=414

68. (1) Jeff Green, 135-136-137-138=416

69. (1) Mike Wallace, 136-137-138-139=418

70. (1) Kyle Petty, 137-138-139-140=420

71. (1) Travis Kvieci, 138-139-140-141=422

72. (1) Scott Speed, 139-140-141-142=424

73. (1) John Nemechek, 140-141-142-143=426

74. (1) Jeremy Mayfield, 141-142-143-144=428

75. (1) Michael Waltrip, 142-143-144-145=430

76. (1) Jason Leffler, 143-144-145-146=432

77. (1) Jeff Green, 144-145-146-147=434

78. (1) Mike Wallace, 145-146-147-148=436

79. (1) Kyle Petty, 146-147-148-149=438

80. (1) Travis Kvieci, 147-148-149-150=440

81. (1) Scott Speed, 148-149-150-151=442

82. (1) John Nemechek, 149-150-151-152=444

83. (1) Jeremy Mayfield, 150-151-152-153=446

84. (1) Michael Waltrip, 151-152-153-154=448

85. (1) Jason Leffler, 152-153-154-155=450

86. (1) Jeff Green, 153-154-155-156=452

87. (1) Mike Wallace, 154-155-156-157=454

88. (1) Kyle Petty, 155-156-157-158=456

89. (1) Travis Kvieci, 156-157-158-159=458

90. (1) Scott Speed, 157-158-159-160=460

91. (1) John Nemechek, 158-159-160-161=462

92. (1) Jeremy Mayfield, 159-160-161-162=464

93. (1) Michael Waltrip, 160-161-162-163=466

94. (1) Jason Leffler, 161-162-163-164=468

95. (1) Jeff Green, 162-163-164-165=470

96. (1) Mike Wallace, 163-164-165-166=472

97. (1) Kyle Petty, 164-165-166-167=474

98. (1) Travis Kvieci, 165-166-167-168=476

99. (1) Scott Speed, 166-167-168-169=478

100. (1) John Nemechek, 167-168-169-170=480

101. (1) Jeremy Mayfield, 168-169-170-171=482

102. (1) Michael Waltrip, 169-170-171-172=484

103. (1) Jason Leffler, 170-171-172-173=486

104. (1) Jeff Green, 171-172-173-174=488

105. (1) Mike Wallace, 172-173-174-175=490

106. (1) Kyle Petty, 173-174-175-176=492

107. (1) Travis Kvieci, 174-175-176-177=494

108. (1) Scott Speed, 175-176-177-178=496

109. (1) John Nemechek, 176-177-178-179=498

110. (1) Jeremy Mayfield, 177-178-179-180=500

111. (1) Michael Waltrip, 178-179-180-181=502

112. (1) Jason Leffler, 179-180-181-182=504

113. (1) Jeff Green, 180-181-182-183=506

114. (1) Mike Wallace, 181-182-183-184=508

115. (1) Kyle Petty, 182-183-184-185=510

116. (1) Travis Kvieci, 183-184-185-186=512

117. (1) Scott Speed, 184-185-186-187=514

118. (1) John Nemechek, 185-186-187-188=516

119. (1) Jeremy Mayfield, 186-187-188-189=518

120. (1) Michael Waltrip, 187-188-189-190=520

121. (1) Jason Leffler, 188-189-190-191=522

122. (1) Jeff Green, 189-190-191-192=524

123. (1) Mike Wallace, 190-191-192-193=526

124. (1) Kyle Petty, 191-192-193-194=528

125. (1) Travis Kvieci, 192-193-194-195=530

126. (1) Scott Speed, 193-194-195-196=532

127. (1) John Nemechek, 194-195-196-197=534

128. (1) Jeremy Mayfield, 195-196-197-198=536

129. (1) Michael Waltrip, 196-197-198-199=538

130. (1) Jason Leffler, 197-198-199-200=540

131. (1) Jeff Green, 198-199-200-201=542

132. (1) Mike Wallace, 199-200-201-202=544

133. (1) Kyle Petty, 200-201-202-203=546

134. (1) Travis Kvieci, 201-202-203-204=548

135. (1) Scott Speed, 202-203-204-205=550

136. (1) John Nemechek, 203-204-205-206=552

137. (1) Jeremy Mayfield, 204-205-206-207=554

138. (1)

Longer than 'other' Washington school

Huskies not only region's top seed but also its best 'feel-good' story

BY EDIE PELLIS
The Associated Press

Bob Knight and Rick Pittino Gonzaga and UCLA. All household names that are part of the Albuquerque regional this year. Only the hard core, though, might be familiar with the top seed — pint-sized guard Nate Robinson, third-year coach Lorenzo Romar and the Washington Huskies.

The Huskies (27-5), who play the majority of their games after most of America has gone to bed, definitely got the attention of the NCAA selection committee.

They won the Pac-10 tournament Saturday and, when Kentucky lost in the Southeastern Conference final Sunday, the team was opened for Romar's team to be seeded first — not bad for a team ranked just 14th in the latest Associated Press poll.

"If you ask me, 'Do we deserve it?' My answer is yes," Romar said. "Are we surprised? I guess the surprising part is that we weren't sure whether someone else, other than us, would think we deserved it."

Washington was the No. 1, Wake Forest as the No. 2 and last year's national runner-up, Georgia Tech, as the No. 3, this is widely regarded as the most wide-open of the regional tournaments.

Gonzaga, arguably the most recognizable team from Washington, earned a third seed and, given the bracket, there's a good argument for this being the year the tiny



Washington coach Lorenzo Romar hugs Jamal Williams after the Huskies' 81-72 victory over Arizona on Saturday. Washington earned not only the Pac-10 tournament title but a No. 1 seeding in the NCAA tourney.

school from Spokane finally gets to the Final Four.

"I don't really sit there and analyze," Bulldogs coach Mark Favey said. "I leave that up to the bracketologists."

All around the bracket are interesting stories featuring familiar names and high-profile programs.

Knight leads sixth-seeded Texas Tech in a first-round game against 11th-seeded UCLA.

Chris Paul of Wake Forest tries to set aside his suspension from the Atlantic Coast Conference tournament — one that contributed

to his team's first-round loss — and lead the Demon Deacons to the regional semis for the second straight year.

Georgia Tech, a bubble team just two weeks ago, got in quickly thanks to its appearance in the ACC tournament final. The Yellow Jackets open against Georgia Washington.

Pittino leads the fourth-seeded Cardinals against Sun Belt champion Louisiana-Lafayette. The Cardinals, ranked sixth in the AP and winners of the regular-season and tournament championships in Conference USA, were

expecting a better seed, and now have reason to play with a chip on their shoulders.

"I've got to lift them up a little bit," Pittino said. "But we're in the tournament, we've met the criteria, we've met all the challenges and we've just got to keep on going."

Pacific looked like it could be the next Gonzaga, a powerful small school that had won 22 straight going into the Big West Conference tournament final. A loss in that game dampened the optimism, but when the bracket came out, the Tigers found them-

selves a No. 8 seed — one win away (against Pitt) from playing the Huskies.

"It looks like a good bracket for us," forward Christian Maraker said.

Indeed, it is wide open, and there is no need to look too far down the bracket to find the kind of intriguing, unknown team that often captures imaginations during the tournament.

That candidate is the Huskies, who get 167 points a game from the last three weeks to greatly improve their standing in the bracket.

They beat out Kentucky, Oklahoma State, Wake Forest and a few other good candidates for a top seed, and even some of the oft-overlooked Pac-10 were surprised.

"It speaks volumes to the selection committee that they were able to give a No. 1 seed to the Pac-10 in the West," Stanford coach Trent Johnson said. "Me personally, I didn't think they were going to get it."

They did, though, and Romar gets much of the credit.

A former Huskie himself, Romar was an assistant under Jim Harrick when UCLA won the national championship in 1995. Romar took over before the 2002-03 season and quickly transformed the Huskies from a regional also-ran into a national power. Washington finished first in the latest RPI ratings. The Pac-10 tournament title was the first league championship of any kind for the Huskies since 1985.

"We've definitely got a banner to put up in the gym next year," Washington forward Bobby Jones said. "We'd love to have another one that says 'National Champions.'"

AP Sports Writers Tim Korte in Seattle and Janie McCauley in San Francisco contributed to this report.

Albuquerque Regional

1. WASHINGTON

Record: 27-5. Last 10: 8-2.
Best win: 83-61 vs. Arizona on Feb. 26.
Key players: G Nate Robinson (13.5 pts., 4.9 ast.), F Simon (16.1 pts., 3.3-apt pcr.), G Brandon Roy (13.2 pts., 1.7 reb.), F Bobby Jones (11.7 pts., 5.4 reb.).

Did you know?: A guard at Washington from 1978-80, Romar played for Golden State, Milwaukee and Detroit before quitting the NBA in 1985 to play for Athletics in Action, the athletic development program for the Oakland Athletics.

Outlook: Talented squad has final four hopes.

2. WAKE FOREST

Record: 26-5. Last 10: 8-2.
Best win: 59-52 vs. North Carolina on Jan. 15.
Key players: G Chris Paul (14.9 pts., 6.5 ast.), C Ray Williams (6.0 pts., 7.7 reb.), G Justin Gray (16.3 pts., 21 ast.).

Did you know?: CBS analyst Billy Packer was an All-ACC guard for Wake in 1962, when the Deacons won their only four straight tourney titles.

Outlook: With Paul running the point, Demon Deacons could make a strong run for the Final Four.

3. GONZAGA

Record: 25-4. Last 10: 10-0.
Best win: 78-75 at Oklahoma State on Dec. 28.
Key players: F Adam Morrison (38.1 pts., 4.8 reb.), F Ronny Turiaf (16.0 pts., 5.1 reb.), G Derek Rudi (14.4 pts., 5.5 ast.).

Did you know?: Giant of 'Zags' wins NCAA wins without longer than Gonzaga's. 'Zags could make Final Four darkhorse.

4. LOUISVILLE

Record: 29-4. Last 10: 10-0.
Best win: 77-70 vs. Cincinnati on Feb. 2.
Key players: F Francisco Garcia (15.3 pts., 2.1 reb.), F Adam Morrison (38.1 pts., 4.8 reb.), G Tajuan Dean (14.2 pts., 4.68 3-pt pcr.).

Did you know?: Louisville's Reggie Theus portrayed a basketball coach for three years on the Southern Conference TV show "Coach Hang Time."

Outlook: Coming on strong, Cardinals could make a long tournament run.

5. GEORGIA TECH

Record: 19-11. Last 10: 6-4.
Best win: 102-101 at Wake Forest on Jan. 27.
Key players: G Jarrett Jack (15.0 pts., 4.6 ast.), G F.J. Elder (13.4 pts., 3.8 3-pt pcr.), G Luke Schenscher (10.4 pts., 7.5 reb.).

Did you know?: Yellow Jackets' loss to Connecticut in last year's title game was best NCAA run in school history.

Outlook: The Yellow Jackets are peaking at the right time, but the selection committee did them no favors. One win could be it.

6. TEXAS TECH

Record: 20-10. Last 10: 5-5.
Best win: 80-79 vs. Kansas on Feb. 14.
Key players: G Romar Ross (16.0 pts., 5.1 reb.), G Jarrett Jack (14.6 pts., 3.3 reb.), F Devonne Gies (11.6 pts., 1.9 reb.).

Did you know?: Ross, the Red Raiders' leading scorer, was a walk-on without a scholarship as a freshman.

Outlook: Never court a Knight-coached team out, but the Red Raiders will be lucky to win two games.

7. WEST VIRGINIA

Record: 21-10. Last 10: 7-3.
Best win: 70-62 at Pittsburgh on Feb. 23.
Key players: G Mike Gansby (10.8 pts., 5.3 reb., 2.3 ast.), F Tyron Sully (12.1 pts.).

Did you know?: The Mountaineers have produced 13 All-Americans over the years including basketball legends Jerry West and "Hot" Rod Hundley.

Outlook: Anyone from the Big East is tough, but Mountaineers lack the big-time player to take them deep into the tournament.

8. PACIFIC

Record: 26-3. Last 10: 9-1.
Best win: 72-69 at Nevada on Dec. 11.
Key players: F/C Mike Maraker (31 pts., 6.3 reb.), F/C Guillaume Vauz (13.1 pts., 7.4 reb.), G David Doubinsky (12.2 pts., 4.0 ast.).

Did you know?: Pacific is one of just two teams in the nation to finish undefeated in its regular conference season (Davidson is the other, from the Southern Conference).

Outlook: The Tigers surprised Providence as a No. 2 seed this year, but no one should overlook this year.

9. PITTSBURGH

Record: 20-8. Last 10: 5-5.
Best win: 72-50 vs. Boston College on Feb. 28.
Key players: G Carl Kravack (13.5 pts., 6.0 ast.), F Cameron Truitt (15.3 pts., 8.0 reb.), F Chris Taft (13.4 pts.).

Did you know?: The Panthers completed a third consecutive season ranked in the Top 10 in 2004, one of only three schools to achieve the honor (Ole Miss and Kansas were the other two).

Outlook: Could surprise, but an up and down season makes a long run in the tournament unlikely for the Panthers.

10. CREIGHTON

Record: 23-10. Last 10: 9-1.
Best win: 78-54 at Missouri on Nov. 23.
Key players: G Nate Funk (17.9 pts., 5.0 reb.), G Johnny Mathies (11.6 pts., 4.26 3-pt pcr.), G Keller Miller (8.6 pts., 2.3 reb.).

Did you know?: Blue Jays' record-run of five consecutive NCAA bids under Altman ended last year when CU went 29-8 and went to NIT.

Outlook: Up-to, smallish Jays could have problems vs. bigger foes from the Pac-10 tournament.

11. GEORGETOWN

Record: 18-10. Last 10: 5-4.
Best win: 78-46 vs. Washington on Jan. 8.
Key players: G Dion Thompson (38.3 pts., 6.0 reb.), G Jordan Farmer (13.6 pts., 5.3 ast.), G Aaron Alford (11.0 pts., 2.2 ast.).

Did you know?: Bruins went to 31 Final Fours, winning nine championships. Since then, UCLA has made Final Four only once while getting past Sweet 16 only three times.

Outlook: The Bruins rely heavily on three freshmen, and their first-round exit from the Pac-10 tournament is likely.

12. GEORGIA WASHINGTON

Record: 22-7. Last 10: 8-2.
Best win: 86-80 vs. Michigan State, 96-83 on Dec. 4.
Key players: G T.J. Thompson (13.7 pts., 3.0 ast.), J.K. Brown (13.5 pts., 3.1 reb.), F Nana Mensah-Bonsu (12.4 pts., 6.6 reb.).

Did you know?: A native from London, England, Mensah-Bonsu goes by "Pops" since his full name is Nana Pops Mensah-Bonsu.

Outlook: The Colonials overachieved to reach the Sweet 16, but more than one game would be a huge reach.

13. LOUISIANA-LAFAYETTE

Record: 20-10. Last 10: 7-3.
Best win: 83-61 vs. Southern Illinois on Jan. 5.
Key players: G Tiras Wade (20.4 pts., 6.0 reb.), F Brian Hamilton (11.5 pts., 7.5 reb.), G Oren Greene (11.7 pts., 4.7 reb.).

Did you know?: Louisiana-Lafayette was known as Southwestern Louisiana until 1999.

Outlook: It was a strong year for the Sun Belt and the Ragin' Cajuns could make a run.

14. WHITNOR

Record: 27-5. Last 10: 10-0.
Best win: 69-61 at Liberty on Feb. 10.
Key players: G Tony Brown (12.8 pts., 4.5 reb.), G James Shuler (12.1 pts., 4.3 reb.), F Otis Daniels (10.8 pts., 6.0 reb.).

Did you know?: The Eagles are making their fifth NCAA tournament appearance in coach Greg Marshall's seventh season.

Outlook: Only one other Big South team finished above .500, so the Eagles don't have much of a base upon which to stage an upset.

15. MONTANA

Record: 20-10. Last 10: 7-3.
Best win: 82-58 vs. New Mexico State on Feb. 14.
Key players: F Mindaugas Katelnyas (12.2 pts., 9.2 reb.), F D.J. Brown (12.8 pts., 6.2 reb.), F Alphonso Pugh (10.8 pts., 3.6 reb.).

Did you know?: The Grizzlies' appearance in the tournament comes in John Shumaker's first year as a head coach.

Outlook: The Southern Conference champ has lost first-round games but more than five points since the past three years. Wake Forest had better be ready.

16. MONTANA

Record: 18-12. Last 10: 8-2.
Best win: 79-74 vs. Washington State on Feb. 26.
Key players: F Kamar Davis (14.8 pts., 5.9 reb.), G Kevin Cisswell (12.4 pts., 4.2 reb.), F Matt Diokriav.

Did you know?: A former Grizzly, Kray Diokriav was the 18th pick of the NBA draft, spending 10 years in the NBA with six teams and seven coaches.

Outlook: The Grizzlies have size but lack experience - Davis is the only senior.

Pro house teams and players in Austin

Duke, Kentucky, Michigan State, Syracuse recent NCAA champs

BY JAIME ARON

The Associated Press

Like to follow powerhouse programs in the NCAA tournament? Want to watch star players? Root for the underdogs? This year's Austin Regional is rich in all those story lines, including the chance that Duke and Kentucky will meet for a spot in the Final Four.

The selection committee on Sunday rewarded the Blue Devils with the No. 1 seed for winning the Atlantic Coast Conference tournament, while the Wildcats dropped to No. 2 after losing the finals of the Southeastern Conference tournament.

The next three spots all went to recent Final Four teams — Oklahoma (2002), Syracuse (national champs in '03) and Michigan State (2001) and national champs in 2000. Even the sixth through ninth seeds — Utah, Cincinnati, Stanford and Mississippi State — have been to the Final Four in the nation's best big man, and three of the nation's top six scorers during the regular season: Vermont's Tim Lincecum, Kentucky's Juan Mendez and Duke's J.J. Redick.

It wouldn't be tournament time without championship upstarts. Among those two victories away from Austin are 14th-seeded Niagara, which will be making its first appearance since Calvin Murphy was the main attraction in 1970, and No. 16 seed Delaware State, which is in for the first time, period. There's also No. 15 seed Eastern Kentucky, whose coach, Travis Ford, helped first-round foe Kentucky reach the Final Four in 1993.



Two of the best big men in the country, Utah's 7-foot Australian, Andrew Bogut, left, and Syracuse's Big East player of the year, Hakin Warrick, will draw plenty of attention in the NCAA tournament's Austin Regional.

If Duke and Kentucky can win three straight games, history indicates it would be one heck of a game. The teams have met in the NCAA tournament five times and all have been decided by six points or less; the last three have been even better, with a total of four points separating the winners and losers.

And if you really want to know ahead, think about who the winner of this region will face in St. Louis: the winner of the Syracuse Regional, which includes North Carolina, reigning champion Connecticut, Kansas and Florida.

The Blue Devils (25-5) open Friday close to home in Charlotte, N.C., against Delaware State (19-13), winner of the Mid-Eastern Athletic Conference championship. Next up, on Sunday, would be the winner of the 8-9 game between Stanford (18-12) and Mississippi State (22-10).

Stanford is 5-3 since losing leading scorer Dan Grunfeld to a knee injury, but recently beat Washington, the top seed in the Albuquerque Regional, and narrowly lost to the Huskies in the semifinals of the Pac-10 tournament. Mississippi State is on the upswing since getting guard Winsome Frazier back from a broken foot, and now the Bulldogs are hoping to get out of the first weekend for the first time since making the Final Four in 1996.

Syracuse and Michigan State have both won national titles since then, and could meet Sunday in Worcester, Mass.

First, Hakin Warrick and fourth-seeded Syracuse (27-6) must get past 13th-seeded Vermont (24-6) on Friday, while fifth-seeded Michigan State (22-6) opens against 12th-seeded Old Dominion (28-5). The Spartans and Orange last met in the

tournament in 2001, when Michigan State won it all.

Syracuse is a popular sleeper pick to come out of this region — if it can be considered a sleeper after its first Big East tournament title since 1992 and after Warrick picked up the tournament MVP to go with his conference player of the year award.

Kentucky (25-5) will be trying to bounce back from its worst-ever loss in the SEC tournament — "Obviously, we're going to have to play better to do well," coach Tubby Smith said — when it plays Eastern Kentucky (22-9). That winner gets either No. 7 Cincinnati (24-7) or No. 10 Iowa (21-11). Those games are Thursday and Saturday in Indianapolis.

"I came here four years ago, and each year I've asked coach Hughes, 'Can we play Kentucky?' and they couldn't arrange for that game to happen," Bearcats forward Jason Mingo said. "I want to win against Iowa, that game's going to happen."

Huggins, however, won't look ahead.

"If they spend all that time thinking about that, they'll be watching Kentucky play Iowa on TV," Huggins said.

Fans in Tucson, Ariz., will get to see Mendez and Bogut, definitely on Thursday and perhaps head-to-head on Saturday.

Mendez, the only player in the NCAA this season to rank in the top 10 in scoring (23.6 points) and rebounding (10.5), leads Niagara (20-9) against 13th-seeded Oklahoma (24-7). Bogut and sixth-seeded Utah (27-5) start with No. 11 Utah (27-7).

Coach Mike Minner said to be conference foes, so they know each other well. Not so for Oklahoma of the Big 12 and Niagara of the Atlantic Athletic Conference.

"There are kids on their team that are going to say, 'Coach, what if you and I are the only two'?" said coach Joe Mihailich said. "So hopefully, that'll work a bit in our favor."

Austin Regional

1. DUKE
Record: 25-5, Last 10: 7-3
Best win: 102-92 at Wake Forest on Jan. 20.
Key players: G J.J. Redick (22.6 pts., 4.7 3-pt pct.), G Chelmer West (15.9 pts., 11.1 reb.), G Daniel Ewing (15.1 pts., 4.0 asts.).
Did you know? Redick is the most accurate FT shooter in the NCAA this season.

2. KENTUCKY
Record: 25-5, Last 10: 7-3
Best win: 102-92 at Wake Forest on Dec. 18.
Key players: G Kelenna Azubuike (14.5 pts., 35.2 3-pt pct.), F Chuck Hayes (10.8 pts., 8.0 reb.), G Rajon Rondo (7.9 pts., 3.1 asts.), F Patrick Sparks (11.4 pts., 3.9 asts.).
Did you know? Wildcats are NCAA tournament winners more than second-place UCLA.

3. OKLAHOMA
Record: 24-7, Last 10: 7-3
Best win: 71-53 at Kansas on Feb. 21.
Key players: F T.J. Jeter (14.7 pts., 7.8 reb.), G Terrell Brandon (12.3 pts., 4.4 reb.), F Kevin Bookout (11.8 pts., 4.4 reb.).
Did you know? Jeter was an All-American spot putter for the Sooner track team in 2003.

4. SYRACUSE
Record: 27-6, Last 10: 6-4
Best win: 90-57 at Villanova on Feb. 12.
Key players: F Hakin Warrick (21.2 pts., 8.2 reb.), G Gerry Mendez (15.7 pts., 5.2 pts., 8.2 reb.), G J.J. Redick (15.1 pts., 4.7 3-pt pct.).
Did you know? Center Craig Firth is the one of only four Syracuse players to earn Academic All-American honors. First to be named to the team more than once.

5. EASTERN KENTUCKY
Record: 22-9, Last 10: 6-4
Best win: 81-67 at Tennessee on Feb. 12.
Key players: F Juan Mendez (23.6 pts., 10.5 reb.), G Travis Ford (15.1 pts., 4.7 3-pt pct.).
Did you know? Coach Travis Ford played for Kentucky and would love to see his alma mater in the first round, but he's not for No. 28.

5. MICHIGAN STATE
Record: 22-10, Last 10: 8-2
Best win: 77-64 at NC-Wilmington on Feb. 24.
Key players: C Paul Davis (11.7 pts., 7.3 reb.), G Maurice Ager (13.4 pts., 4.2 3-pt pct.), F Alan Anderson (13.4 pts., 2.5 asts.).
Did you know? 12 of the 17 Spartans are from Michigan.

6. UTAH
Record: 27-5, Last 10: 8-2
Best win: 69-50 over New Mexico on Jan. 22.
Key players: C Andrew Bogut (20.6 pts., 12.0 reb.), G Marc Jackson (10.1 pts., 3.3 reb., 3.8 asts.).
Did you know? Over the past 10 seasons the Utes have the seventh best winning percentage in Division I (77.7) with a 254-73 record.

7. TEXAS
Record: 24-7, Last 10: 7-3
Best win: 71-53 at Kansas on Feb. 21.
Key players: F T.J. Jeter (14.7 pts., 7.8 reb.), G Terrell Brandon (12.3 pts., 4.4 reb.), F Kevin Bookout (11.8 pts., 4.4 reb.).
Did you know? Jeter was an All-American spot putter for the Sooner track team in 2003.

8. STANFORD
Record: 18-12, Last 10: 6-4
Best win: 80-58 vs. Charlotte on Jan. 19.
Key players: F Jason Maxwell (16.1 pts., 2.7 reb.), F Eric Hicks (13.7 pts., 9.0 reb.), F James White (10.3 pts., 2.1 asts.).
Did you know? Only three of the 13 Bears have ever been to the Final Four.

9. MISSISSIPPI STATE
Record: 22-10, Last 10: 8-2
Best win: 80-58 over Arkansas on Jan. 15.
Key players: C Lawrence Roberts (17.0 pts., 11.1 reb.), G Winsome Frazier (12.4 pts., 3.6 3-pt pct.), G Shane Ponder (11.5 pts., 2.5 asts.).
Did you know? Coach Rick Stansbury is first coach to guide Bulldogs to three consecutive NCAA titles.

10. IOWA
Record: 21-11, Last 10: 6-4
Best win: 76-71 vs. Louisville on Nov. 22.
Key players: G Greg Brunner (14.5 pts., 8.3 reb.), G Adam Hallock (14.5 pts., 4.0 3-pt pct.), Jeff Horner (14.0 pts., 4.6 asts.).
Did you know? On Feb. 2, the Hawkeyes suspended their leading scorer Pierre Pierce, who was charged with sexual assault.

11. TEXAS A&M
Record: 27-7, Last 10: 8-2
Best win: 81-67 at NC-Wilmington on Jan. 12.
Key players: F Omar Thomas (20.2 pts., 6.7 reb.), G Filiberto Rivera (12.9 pts., 7.2 asts.), G-F Jason Williams (11.8 pts., 3.0 asts.).
Did you know? Thomas was with Texas Western, coach Don Haskins' Minors beat Kentucky, 72-56, to win 1966 national title. It was the first time a team that started five African-Americans had won the championship.

12. NIAGARA
Record: 20-9, Last 10: 8-2
Best win: 81-67 at NC-Wilmington on Feb. 5.
Key players: G F.J. Jeter (14.7 pts., 7.8 reb.), G Terrell Brandon (12.3 pts., 4.4 reb.), F Kevin Bookout (11.8 pts., 4.4 reb.).
Did you know? Jeter was an All-American spot putter for the Sooner track team in 2003.

13. VERMONT
Record: 24-6, Last 10: 7-3
Best win: 84-59 at Holy Cross on Dec. 30.
Key players: F Taylor Coppenger (25.1 pts., 8.9 reb.), G J.J. Redick (22.6 pts., 4.7 3-pt pct.), F German Mingo Nijja (5.5 pts., 6.9 reb.).
Did you know? Coppenger is the top scorer in the country and one of the best in the nation.

14. MISSISSIPPI STATE
Record: 22-10, Last 10: 8-2
Best win: 80-58 over Arkansas on Jan. 15.
Key players: C Lawrence Roberts (17.0 pts., 11.1 reb.), G Winsome Frazier (12.4 pts., 3.6 3-pt pct.), G Shane Ponder (11.5 pts., 2.5 asts.).
Did you know? Coach Rick Stansbury is first coach to guide Bulldogs to three consecutive NCAA titles.

15. EASTERN KENTUCKY
Record: 22-9, Last 10: 6-4
Best win: 81-67 at NC-Wilmington on Feb. 5.
Key players: G F.J. Jeter (14.7 pts., 7.8 reb.), G Terrell Brandon (12.3 pts., 4.4 reb.), F Kevin Bookout (11.8 pts., 4.4 reb.).
Did you know? Jeter was an All-American spot putter for the Sooner track team in 2003.

16. DELAWARE STATE
Record: 18-12, Last 10: 6-4
Best win: 80-58 vs. Charlotte on Jan. 19.
Key players: F Jason Maxwell (16.1 pts., 2.7 reb.), F Eric Hicks (13.7 pts., 9.0 reb.), F James White (10.3 pts., 2.1 asts.).
Did you know? Only three of the 13 Bears have ever been to the Final Four.

17. TEXAS
Record: 24-7, Last 10: 7-3
Best win: 71-53 at Kansas on Feb. 21.
Key players: F T.J. Jeter (14.7 pts., 7.8 reb.), G Terrell Brandon (12.3 pts., 4.4 reb.), F Kevin Bookout (11.8 pts., 4.4 reb.).
Did you know? Jeter was an All-American spot putter for the Sooner track team in 2003.

18. STANFORD
Record: 18-12, Last 10: 6-4
Best win: 80-58 vs. Charlotte on Jan. 19.
Key players: F Jason Maxwell (16.1 pts., 2.7 reb.), F Eric Hicks (13.7 pts., 9.0 reb.), F James White (10.3 pts., 2.1 asts.).
Did you know? Only three of the 13 Bears have ever been to the Final Four.

19. MISSISSIPPI STATE
Record: 22-10, Last 10: 8-2
Best win: 80-58 over Arkansas on Jan. 15.
Key players: C Lawrence Roberts (17.0 pts., 11.1 reb.), G Winsome Frazier (12.4 pts., 3.6 3-pt pct.), G Shane Ponder (11.5 pts., 2.5 asts.).
Did you know? Coach Rick Stansbury is first coach to guide Bulldogs to three consecutive NCAA titles.

20. NIAGARA
Record: 20-9, Last 10: 8-2
Best win: 81-67 at NC-Wilmington on Feb. 5.
Key players: G F.J. Jeter (14.7 pts., 7.8 reb.), G Terrell Brandon (12.3 pts., 4.4 reb.), F Kevin Bookout (11.8 pts., 4.4 reb.).
Did you know? Jeter was an All-American spot putter for the Sooner track team in 2003.

Tar stacked, stacked bracket' with St. Louis

Syracuse Regional champ will have to 'earn their way' to St. Louis

By DENNIS WASZAK JR.
The Associated Press

North Carolina, Connecticut, Kansas and Florida are a formidable foursome at the top of the Syracuse Regional.

Throw in talent-laden teams like Villanova, Wisconsin and North Carolina State, and this 16-team field shapes up as one of the toughest in recent NCAA tournament history.

"This is a stacked, stacked bracket," UConn coach Jim Calhoun said Sunday after the NCAA tournament's 64 teams were announced. "Therefore, whoever gets to St. Louis is going to have to earn their way."

The top-seeded Tar Heels (27-4) had its first 20-win season since 2000-2001 and finished atop the Atlantic Coast Conference regular-season standings for the first time since 1993, but lost to Georgia Tech in the ACC tournament semifinals.

"Earning a No. 1 seed is truly a reward for a fantastic season," coach Roy Williams said in a statement. "I am extremely happy for our seniors to make it to the NCAA tournament two years in a row after enduring a difficult first year two years."

The Tar Heels will face the winner of Tuesday's play-in game Friday in Charlotte, N.C. Oakland (12-18), which won the Mid-Continent Conference tournament, will play Alabama A&M, the Southwestern Athletic Conference champion in Raymont, Miss.

With a victory, Carolina would face the winner of the Minnesota (21-10)-Iowa State (18-11) matchup.

There's also the possibility of an intriguing Elite Eight game with North Carolina and Kansas — the school Williams let to coach his alma mater in 2003.

"It would be a dream for me," Kansas senior guard Michael Lee said. "I want to play my former coach. I didn't think I had a chance to do that. But if we get a chance to meet them, it would be fun."

The Jayhawks (23-6), the No. 3 seed, opened Bucknell (22-9) in Oklahoma City. Kansas was ranked No. 1 in the coun-



Kansas coach coach Bill Self, left, has downplayed the potential Elite Eight matchup with former Kansas coach Roy Williams, right, now coaching No. 1 seed North Carolina.



try early on and No. 2 for most of the season but lost five of its last eight games, including the Big 12 semifinal to Oklahoma State.

"Carolina is not on my brain at all," Kansas coach Bill Self said. "We've got Bucknell and we've got Wisconsin or Northern Iowa if we're fortunate enough to beat Bucknell. That's all this team should be focused on and thinking about."

Wisconsin (22-8) lost to No. 1 overall seed Illinois in the Big Ten championship, while Northern Iowa (21-10) has won five of seven.

Defending national champion Connecticut, the No. 2 seed, opens against Central Florida (24-8) at Worcester, Mass. The Huskies (22-7) have won 10 of their last 12 and earned a share of the Big East regular-season crown — all while dealing with personal setbacks.

Star recruit AJ. Price is recovering from a brain hemorrhage he suffered in October. Leading scorer Rashad Anderson battled a life-threatening illness last month brought on by complications from a skin infection.

"It's been hard," forward Charlie Villanueva said. "We've been through a lot and it's a blessing being a top seed. Without a doubt, it's toughened us up."

Next up would be the winner of the Charlotte (21-7)-North Carolina State (19-13) game.

State was ranked as high as No. 12 and started 10-13 this season, but lost nine of its next 12 before working their way back into tournament contention.

"Win or lose, they can always remember how they were in a very tough spot and yet

they fought their way out of it," coach Herb Sendek said. "That's something that's going to stay with these guys for a long time."

Florida (23-7), which beat Kentucky twice in eight days to win the regular-season finale and its first SEC tournament title — opens against Ohio (21-10) in Nashville, Tenn.

"We're very, very excited about what happened today," coach Billy Donovan said. "But we've got to be able to take that next step and just focus on the NCAA tournament and getting ready to play."

The last time the Gators made the Final Four, also going through the Syracuse Regional, was in 2000, when they lost to Michigan State 89-76 in the national championship game. In the four years since, Florida hasn't gotten past the first round.

But the Gators are playing their best basketball of the season — winning seven in a row and allowing an average of just 56.4 points during that span.

The Florida-Ohio winner takes on whoever comes out of the Villanova-New Mexico game — one of the tournament's most intriguing 5-12 matchups.

Fifth-seeded Villanova (22-7), who played in the NIT the last five years, had an eight-game winning streak before losing to West Virginia in the Big East semifinals. "Nova gained confidence late in the season with a win over their 3rd Boston College last month and then No. 2 Kansas in January."

"I think it's helped us a lot to prepare for this particular moment, playing those tough teams," forward Curtis Sumpter said.

"I think we're in one of the toughest brackets out there."

New Mexico (20-6) has won nine in a row and was a bit miffed at getting a No. 12 seed after winning the Mountain West championship tournament.

"I thought we'd get a 9 or 11 or possibly a 10," coach Mark Gottfried said. "Twelve seeds are usually the last at-large (teams) in I thought being 26-6 we deserved a little more favorable number ... but we'll just take what we got."

Syracuse Regional

1. NORTH CAROLINA

Record: 27-18 vs. Kentucky on Dec. 4.

Key players: Sean May (16.7 pts., 10.9 reb.), G Rashad McCants (15.8 pts., 2.8 ast.), G Raymond Felton (12.0 pts., 7.3 ast.), F Javaw Williams (10.0 pts., 4.0 reb.).

Did you know?: Roy Williams' 35 tournament wins is tied with Oklahoma State's Eddie Sutton for the most wins in the national title.

Outlook: Powerful and deep, anything but a Final Four disappointment.

2. CONNECTICUT

Record: 27-14 at Pittsburgh on Feb. 26.

Key players: F/C Johnathan Williams (21.9 pts., 8.5 reb.), F Charlie Villanueva (13.1 pts., 8.1 reb.), Rudy Gay (11.9 pts., 4.9 3-pt. pct.), G/Rashad Anderson (12.8 pts.).

Did you know?: After Allen shot the Connecticut record for three-point shooting at 44.3 percent (23-52).

Outlook: Rashad Anderson returned in Big East tournament after missing seven games with staph infection, but it's a strong performance from Anderson if they hope get back to the Final Four.

23. KANSAS

Record: 23-6 at Louisville on Jan. 9.

Key players: G Wayne Simmon (35.4 pts., 11.1 reb.), G Keith Langford (34.4 pts., 2.8 reb.), G Aaron Miles (19.4 pts.).

Did you know?: Kansas has not lost a first-round game in 10 appearances.

Outlook: Jayhawks are talented enough to make the third Final Four, but it's a long shot, but only if they can shake a late-season slump.

23. VILLANOVA

Record: 23-7 at Louisville on Feb. 5.

Key players: G Anthony Robinson (18.6 pts., 2.4 ast.), G Matt Watson (13.9 pts., 4.32 3-pt. pct.), G Andre Miller (13.9 pts.).

Did you know?: Donovan and Texas Tech's Bob Knight are the only coaches to win the national title and play in a Final Four.

Outlook: Could win a few. Could lose early. This team is a mystery.

5. VILLANOVA

Record: 22-17 at Louisville on Jan. 22.

Key players: F Curtis Sumpter (16.2 pts., 7.4 reb.), F Mike Wilkinson (14.9 pts., 7.2 reb.), G Sharif Chambliss (7.7 pts., 2.4 ast.).

Did you know?: Chambliss led Penn State in scoring as part of a sophomore (146 pts.) and a junior (14.7 pts.).

Outlook: Villanova has jelled the past six weeks and the season shows it can play with the big boys, but a repeat of the Wildcats' 1985 championship magic is unlikely.

6. WISCONSIN

Record: 22-9 at Alabama on Jan. 16.

Key players: F Alando Tucker (15.0 pts., 6.7 reb.), F Mike Wilkinson (14.9 pts., 7.2 reb.), G Sharif Chambliss (7.7 pts., 2.4 ast.).

Did you know?: Chambliss led Penn State in scoring as part of a sophomore (146 pts.) and a junior (14.7 pts.).

Outlook: Pesty badgers could befuddle their opponents or be gone in a flash.

11. NORTH IOWA

Record: 21-10 at Louisville on Dec. 4.

Key players: F Curtis Withers (17.5 pts., 8.3 reb.), F Eddie Sassen (15.3 pts., 8.4 reb.), G/F Brendan Plavich (14.1 pts.).

Did you know?: With a nice blend of inside-outside, Charlotte could catch a team or two napping, but the others drop their last three, which is troubling.

11. MINNESOTA

Record: 21-10 at Louisville on Feb. 5.

Key players: G/Vincent Grier (17.9 pts., 1.9 reb.), C Jeff Hagan (11.5 pts., 2.5 reb.), G Aaron Robinson (8.0 pts., 4.00 3-pt. pct.).

Did you know?: Before coming to Minnesota, coach Tom Izzo led Gonzaga to the national title in 1998.

Outlook: Minnesota has overachieved all year. Anything more than one win would be huge.

9. IOWA STATE

Record: 18-11 at Louisville on Feb. 19.

Key players: G Curtis Stinson (17.3 pts., 5.4 reb.), G Jared Homan (13.4 pts., 8.2 reb.), G Will Ballo (12.8 pts., 4.9 ast.).

Did you know?: Only four players on Iowa's roster have played in the state of Iowa.

Outlook: One win is possible for the streaky Cyclones, who started the season 0-5. Anything more is hard to fathom.

10. KANSAS STATE

Record: 19-13 at Louisville on Feb. 13.

Key players: F Julius Hodge (17.1 pts., 6.9 reb.), G Cameron Bennerman (9.2 pts., 4.05 3-pt. pct.), G Engrin Asar (8.1 pts., 2.4 ast.).

Did you know?: Since winning 19 NCAA games under late Jim Valvano and Norm Sloan from 1979-89, Wolfpack are just 3-4 in NCAA play.

Outlook: The Wolfpack surged at the end of the season and made a good run in the ACC tournament, but getting beyond Connecticut in the second round will be very difficult.

11. NORTH IOWA

Record: 21-10 at Louisville on Feb. 13.

Key players: F Grant Stout (11.4 pts., 7.7 reb.), F Erik Crawford (13.3 pts., 4.0 3-pt. pct.).

Did you know?: NIU has won 20 games or more in consecutive seasons for first time.

Outlook: Scrappy Panthers led eventual NCAA runner-up Georgia Tech for much of way in first round last year before falling. Expect a similar tussle against Wisconsin.

12. NEW MEXICO

Record: 26-6 at Louisville on Feb. 21.

Key players: F Danny Granger (18.3 pts., 8.5 reb.), G Troy DeVries (11.6 pts., 2.8 ast.).

Did you know?: The Lobos have finished second in the nation in attendance five times, third on four occasions, and fourth six times.

Outlook: Lobos beat a tough Utah team to earn a spot in the tournament and have the talent to stick around awhile.

13. OHIO

Record: 21-10 at Louisville on Feb. 2.

Key players: G Michael Green (14.7 pts., 3.8 reb.), G Chris McKelvie (12.2 pts., 3.8 reb.), F Leon Williams (12.9 pts., 8.6 reb.).

Did you know?: Assistant coach Kevin Kuwilk has been stationed in Iraq as an Army engineer captain since October. He took his two-week leave to return for the end of the season.

Outlook: The Bobcats rely heavily on Williams' post play. The team's defense is the only thing Ohio could cause trouble for some higher seeds.

22. BUCKNELL

Record: 22-9 at Pittsburgh on Jan. 2.

Key players: G Jason Bettenkort (12.1 pts., 8.83 F pct.), G/F Charles Lee (12.5 pts., 6.3 reb., 4.0 3-pt. pct.), C Chris McKelvie (12.2 pts., 4.7 reb.).

Did you know?: No Patriot League team has ever won a national title.

Outlook: Victories over Pittsburgh and St. Joseph's prove the Bison have the talent to surprise any team for the first time.

15. CENTRAL FLORIDA
Record: 24-8 at Utah State on Nov. 20.

Key players: G Josh Smith (14.1 pts., 3.4 reb.), G Gary Johnson (13.2 pts., 4.0 reb.), F Anthony Williams (12.9 pts., 2.6 reb.).

Did you know?: UCF is among the largest universities in the nation, with 44,000 students.

Outlook: The Knights have won 11 of their past 12, but likely will struggle against UConn, their first major-conference game of the season.

16. ALABAMA A&M

Record: 18-13 at Louisville on Feb. 11.

Key players: G Hootie Trotter (14.8 pts., 3.9 reb.), G Joe Marshall (13.9 pts., 2.8 reb.).

Outlook: The Bulldogs have "one-and-done" written all over them.

18. OKLAHOMA

Record: 12-18 at Louisville on Feb. 11.

Key players: G Kevon Marshall (19.7 pts., 7.7 reb.), F Courtney Scott (17.9 pts., 7.3 reb.).

Outlook: Oklahoma has had their Cinderella moment in the MCC tourney.

Illinois Plains Champions

As if they needed more of an advantage, the Illini will be close to home throughout the tournament

By NANCY ARMOUR

The Associated Press

Illinois couldn't have a better draw unless the NCAA tournament was moved to Assembly Hall.

The top-ranked Illini drew the overall No. 1 seed and the Chicago Regional on Sunday, essentially giving them homecourt advantage for the entire NCAA tournament. All three rounds are within a three-hour drive of the campus, and the regional finals are in Chicago, where most of the players grew up.

"It gives us a great advantage," Roger Powell Jr. said. "Our fan support is so strong. Even if we went far away, I'm sure they'd come. This just makes it easier on their gas money, you might say."

Illinois set its sights on a No. 1 seed months ago, with Nick Smith saying in October, "It's St. Louis or bust." Which No. 1 really didn't matter, though the Illini know their geography as well as anybody else.

And the Illini made it easy on the selection committee, going 32-1, spending almost the entire season at No. 1 and winning the Big Ten title and conference tournament.

Even a loss in the regular-season finale didn't hurt them, though it had seemed to reinforce what doubters had been saying all year. The big draw for Illinois there is little, if any, depth and the Big Ten isn't the ACC. The Illini may have kept their No. 1 ranking a week, but many voters preferred North Carolina.

But Illinois won the Big Ten tournament Sunday after North Carolina lost to Georgia Tech in

the ACC semifinals. The Tar Heels finished the year 27-4. All the other top schools finished with at least four losses.

"We put ourselves in the position we wanted to be in. All we have to do is take advantage of it," said James Augustine, the most valued player in the Big Ten tournament. "We're happy with the position we're in."

They should be. While other tournament teams will be spending much of their time traveling — Alabama-Birmingham was sent to Boise, Idaho, for the opening round — the Illini could hitch rides and still make it with time to spare.

Indianapolis, where the Illini

"They are definitely feeding us to the lions."

Tom Green

Fairleigh Dickinson coach

will play 16th-seeded Fairleigh Dickinson on Thursday, is a two-hour drive. Chicago is less than 2½ hours away, and St. Louis is on the state line, a mere three-hour jaunt.

And talk about fan-friendliness. When Illinois played in the Wooden Classic in December, Illini fans overran the city. Chicago is merely an extension of Champaign, home to eight players and the largest alumni concentration.

On Sunday, the entire arena was awash in orange except for two small sections. They're not shy about their allegiance, either. They even booed the clips of Wisconsin coach Bo Ryan's fight song that flashed on the scoreboard.

"Hopefully our people, being up

tickets," coach Bruce Weber said. "We talked about having a chance to go to Indy, to go to Chicago. We're pleased with that. At the same time, I told the kids I want part of a No. 1 seed at Purdue and we got upset in the second round. So you can't take anything for granted."

Don't worry about that, Deron Williams said.

"We're not Purdue. We're trying to write our own stories," he said. "We're going to be focused. We've got Fairleigh Dickinson first. We're going to concentrate on them."

Great, just what the Knights wanted to hear. Fairleigh Dickinson won the Northeast Conference championship to earn a spot in the NCAA tournament for the first time in seven years.

The Knights (20-12) knew they'd be facing a No. 1 team; they just didn't think it would be Illinois.

They are definitely feeding us to the lions," Fairleigh Dickinson coach Tom Green said.

Illinois isn't the only team in the Big Ten to have a friendly travel schedule. Oklahoma State was tapped as the No. 2 seed after winning the Big 12 tournament, and drew Oklahoma City for the opening round.

The Cowboys (24-6) play 15th-seeded Southeast Louisiana (24-8) on Friday.

"We're really wanted to go to Oklahoma City. We have a very good chance there," Daniel Bobek said. "If we make it to Chicago, it is the same thing that we faced last year, when we had to travel in New Jersey, which is like playing St. Joe's at home."

For those not keeping score, the Cowboys knocked off



Illinois coach Bruce Weber waves the net he cut down after the Illini beat Wisconsin 54-43 in the title game of the Big Ten tournament.

top-seeded Saint Joseph's in the regional finals to advance to the Final Four.

"I think we have a good bracket, considering the other teams in the Big 12," Joey Graham said. "We have a great opportunity."

While the Illini and Cowboys had no complaints with their seedings, Boston College was more than a little bitter. Back when they were 20-0 and ranked third in the country, the Eagles were in line for a No. 1 seed.

But after going 4-4 in their last eight games—including a loss to

West Virginia in their first game of the Big East tournament—the Eagles found themselves seeded fourth in the Chicago regional.

Worse, they were shipped to Cleveland for the opening round instead of to nearby Worcester, Mass. When the Eagles saw their No. 4 seed, they sat stone-faced while students watching the selection show with them booed.

Boston College will play 13th-seeded Penn (20-8) on Thursday.

Chicago Regional

1. ILLINOIS

Record: 32-1. Last 10: 9-1.
Best win: 91-73 vs. Wake Forest on Dec. 1.
Key players: G Luther Head (16.1 pts., 425 3-pt. aces), G Brown (14.2 pts., 494 3-pt. aces), G Deron Williams (12.4 pts., 6.6 ast.).

Did you know? Power forward John Henson, Lon Kruger, Bill Self, Weber have led Illinois to the top of the Big Ten in the past three seasons.

Outlook: After a magical season, if this experienced, talented team doesn't make it to the Final Four, the land of the Illini will be crushed.

2. OKLAHOMA STATE

Record: 24-6. Last 10: 8-2.
Best win: 74-65 vs. Syracuse on Dec. 7.
Key players: G John Lucas (18.3 pts., 5.9 FT pct.), F Joey Graham (17.7 pts., 6.4 reb.), G Deron Williams (12.4 pts., 6.6 ast.).

Did you know? John Lucas, whose father was a pro All-American in basketball and basketball, Maryland, was nationally ranked as a junior tennis player.

Outlook: With a few breaks, OSU has the horses to make it back to another Final Four. The team has the talent in the three-point shooting (42 percent).

3. ARIZONA

Record: 27-6. Last 10: 8-2.
Best win: 82-52 vs. Wake Forest on Jan. 27.
Key players: G Salim Stoudamire (18.2 pts., 5.9 3-pt. pct.), G Channing Frye (15.6 pts., 7.2 reb.), Hassan Adams (12.5 pts., 5.9 reb.).

Did you know? Frye is the son of John Wooden this season for most Pac-10 wins in history.

Outlook: After starting season 20-0, Eagles stung by their first tournament loss to Arizona, Still, they should be favored to reach Sweet 16.

4. BOSTON COLLEGE

Record: 24-8. Last 10: 6-4.
Best win: 82-52 vs. Wake Forest on Feb. 19.
Key players: F Craig Smith (17.3 pts., 8.3 reb.).

Did you know? Coach Al Skinner has led Boston College to two Big Ten regular-season crowns, one Big East Tournament title and four national titles.

5. ALABAMA

Record: 24-7. Last 10: 7-3.
Best win: 88-49 vs. Mississippi State on Jan. 18.
Key players: G Kennedy Winston (18.1 pts., 2.1 ast.), G Deron Williams (12.4 pts., 2.1 ast.), F Chuck Davis (14.2 pts., 6.8 reb.).

Did you know? Alabama is a Division I member of the NCAA Sweet 16 team, Gottfried set a record in the Big Ten for a player in a win over Vanderbilt.

Outlook: The talented team could reach Sweet 16, but don't look for much more.

6. MISSOURI STATE

Record: 20-9. Last 10: 5-5.
Best win: 69-57 vs. Oklahoma on Feb. 22.
Key players: F Brandon Bass (14.5 pts., 8.8 reb.), G Darrell Mitchell (13.5 pts., 3.0 ast.).

Did you know? Josh Maravich, son of the late Larry Maravich, is a walk-on guard for the Tigers.

Outlook: Lots of promise but little production from the Tigers, who will have to struggle to make it to the Final Four.

7. SOUTHERN ILLINOIS

Record: 26-5. Last 10: 7-3.
Best win: 71-67 vs. Creighton on Feb. 12.
Key players: G Daniel Gibson (14.5 pts., 5.1 reb.), G Jamaal Tatum (12.1 pts., 2.2 ast.), G Stetson Davis (13.1 pts., 8.7 reb.).

Did you know? Brooks was named Missouri Valley's best player of the year in 2002 and second in 2003.

Outlook: With surprise run to Sweet 16 in 2002 and losing by a point to Missouri and Alabama in first round last two years, Salukis are not to be taken lightly.

8. TEXAS

Record: 20-9. Last 10: 6-4.
Best win: 75-61 vs. Oklahoma State on Jan. 17.
Key players: G Daniel Gibson (14.5 pts., 5.1 reb.), F Brad Buckman (12.7 pts., 8.3 reb.), C Jason Smith (12.4 pts., 5.1 reb.).

Did you know? Buckman's father won two NCAA championships, 1972-73 while playing for the Longhorns golf team with Ben Crenshaw.

Outlook: Stung by the loss of P.J. Tucker due to a knee injury, the Longhorns will be very fortunate to make the Sweet 16.

9. NEVADA

Record: 24-6. Last 10: 9-1.
Best win: 82-60 at UTEP on Feb. 12.
Key players: F Nick Frazier (21.5 pts., 9.4 reb.), F Fernon Pinney (12.4 pts., 7.6 reb.), G Ramon Sessions (9.2 pts., 8.5 ast.).

Did you know? Nevada is one of the most successful teams in the last 20 years of the NCAA tournament.

Outlook: Underdogged Wolf Pack shocked field last year, but could pull another surprise against Texas.

10. ST. MARY'S

Record: 25-8. Last 10: 7-3.
Best win: 88-56 vs. Gonzaga on Jan. 8.
Key players: G Paul Maravich (16.8 pts., 4.37 reb.), G Daniel Gibson (14.5 pts., 6.7 reb.), G E. Rowland (11.2 pts., 3.8 ast.).

Did you know? Father of basketball star Larry Bird in 1959 came four years before NCAA was born.

Outlook: The Blazers upset Washington and Kentucky last year. A similar run is unlikely but not out of the question.

11. WISCONSIN-MILWAUKEE

Record: 24-5. Last 10: 9-1.
Best win: 86-56 vs. Wisconsin-Green Bay on Jan. 15.

Key players: G Ed McCants (17.4 pts., 2.8 reb.), G Deron Williams (12.4 pts., 5.9 reb.), G Boo Davis (10.4 pts., 3.3 reb.).

Did you know? McCants, the Horizon League Player of the Year, has made at least one shot in every Panthers game this season.

Outlook: Fared poorly against big brother Wisconsin and Kansas during regular season. A first-round upset over Alabama would be a shocker.

12. PENNSYLVANIA

Record: 20-8. Last 10: 9-1.
Best win: 87-50 vs. St. Joseph's on Jan. 25.
Key players: G Tim Begley (13.8 pts., 5.4 reb.), G Ibrahim Jaaber (11.3 pts., 2.7 ast.), F Steve Danley (9.4 pts., 5.1 reb.).

Did you know? 1979, Quakers rode upset wins over North Carolina, Syracuse, St. John's to the Final Four trip where they were thumped, 40-67, by Magic Johnson-led Michigan State.

Outlook: Only 1-7 in NCAA games under coach Fran Dunphy. Quakers are capable of close call against Boston College, but no more.

13. UTAH STATE

Record: 24-8. Last 10: 8-2.
Best win: 84-60 at Cal State Fullerton on Jan. 31.
Key players: F Spencer Nelson (16.4 pts., 8.1 reb.), G Jaycee Carroll (14.6 pts., 7.1 reb.), G Nate Harris (11.3 pts., 7.2 reb.).

Did you know? Last year's Utah State team was dented a tournament berth despite a Top 25 ranking and a 25-4 record.

Outlook: A good mix of youth and veterans, the Aggies could catch Arizona napping.

14. SOUTH CAROLINA

Record: 24-8. Last 10: 8-2.
Best win: 84-60 at Duke State on Nov. 21.
Key players: F Ricky Woods (17.2 pts., 6.9 reb.), G Jonathan Patton (11.6 pts., 3.2 reb.), C Nate Lofgren (11.3 pts., 7.2 reb.).

Did you know? The Lions have the sixth-best scoring defense in the nation, allowing just 58.6 points per game.

Outlook: With no experience in the tournament or even against a big-conference team this season, the Lions are a long shot for a single win.

15. FAIRLEIGH Dickinson

Record: 20-9. Last 10: 5-5.
Key players: G Tim Begley (13.8 pts., 5.4 reb.), G Ibrahim Jaaber (11.3 pts., 2.7 ast.), F Steve Danley (9.4 pts., 5.1 reb.).

Did you know? Fairleigh Dickinson is a dual-campus university that fields 16 Division I teams.

Outlook: The Knights played virtually no team or conference basketball in the Big Ten, they'll likely be hopelessly overmatched.

What! Who's No.1?

Committee says Stanford isn't worthy of a top regional seeding

BY CHUCK SCHOFFN

The Associated Press

LSU and Tennessee tried to make it easy on the selection committee for NCAA women's basketball tournament.

If only the other top teams had been as cooperative.

By winning so often against top-caliber competition, LSU and Tennessee were obvious choices as No. 1 seeds in the tournament bracket that went up Sunday. It took careful examination and considerable debate to come up with the two others: Michigan State and North Carolina.

Uh, notice anybody missing here? That would be Stanford, the No. 1 team in The Associated Press poll. For the first time since it happened to Texas in 1984, the nation's top-ranked team is not a No. 1 seed in the NCAA field.

The disappointed Cardinal, 29-2 with 20 straight victories, did their best to be diplomatic. Still, it wasn't what they had expected after sweeping the regular-season and tournament championships in the Pac-10, a league that ended up with as many NCAA teams (5) as the more highly regarded Southeastern Conference.

"Honestly, a long time ago I stopped trying to figure out the committee and seeds," said Stanford coach Tara VanDerveer, whose team reached the regional finals last year as a No. 6 seed.

"What's much more important to me is the team being healthy. There's no sense in overanalyzing the thing."

Stanford wasn't healthy the last time it was seeded No. 1, in 1998, and was stunned by 16th-seeded Harvard in the first round.

LSU was the overall No. 1 seed and was followed by Tennessee, Michigan State and North Carolina. Baylor also got consideration for a No. 1 before ending up as the highest-ranked No. 2 seed.

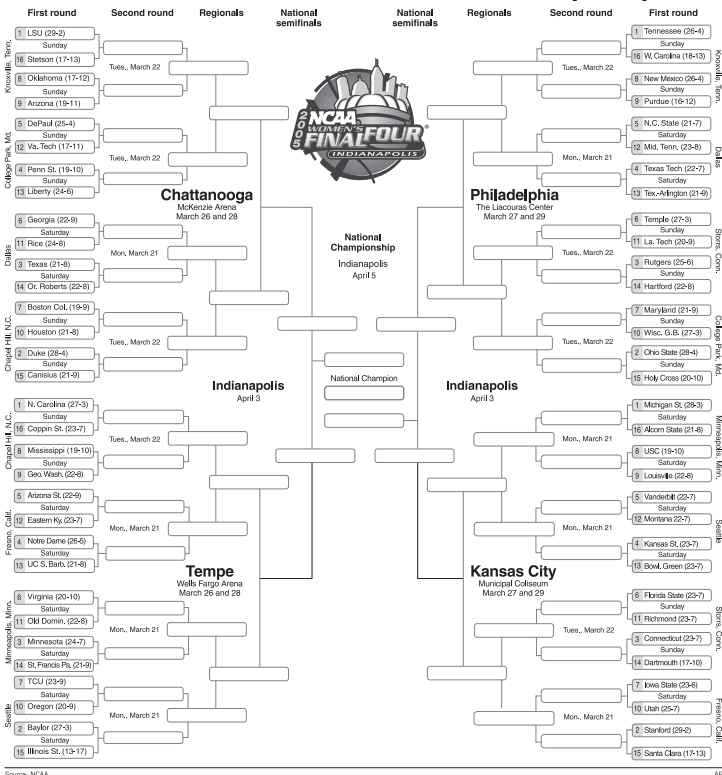
Stanford came next

"We spent more time on the No. 1s than any year I've been on the committee," said Lynn Parkes, who chairs the group. "When we got down to those last two, there wasn't much to separate them."

Stanford's seeding wasn't the only thing that raised questions.

The committee decided to send Rutgers to the first- and second-round site at Connecticut, where the teams had a flare-up after the Big East championship game last week.

2005 NCAA Division I women's basketball championship



Source: NCAV.

Rutgers guard Cappie Pondexter pointed at UConn coach Geno Auriemma after hearing something she felt was objectionable late in the game. Auriemma insisted he was talking to an official.

Connecticut and Rutgers won't play each other because they're in different regionals, but hard feelings might linger.

"I don't know, it doesn't take a lot of imagination to see their thinking," Rutgers coach C. Vivian Stringer said. "After all, we just came back from there. There was a lot of controversy there, so why not send them there again? Who knows what they are thinking?"

Making LSU and Tennessee the top seeds was something the committee didn't have to defend.

LSU, which spent more time at No. 1 in the poll than anyone else this season, went 14-0 in the Southeastern Conference, then lost to Tennessee by two in the finals of the SEC tournament.

Tennessee lost only to LSU in

the conference season and played the nation's toughest schedule.

Two teams from the same conference have been No. 1 seeds 10 times previously, most recently in 2003. Tennessee and LSU also were the two that year.

"It's great for the program," said LSU coach Pokey Chatman, who got the Lady Tigers to the Final Four last season while subbing for ailing Sue Gunter. "I can remember wondering if you were going to get in or wondering if you were going to be a 1, 2, 3 or 4 seed. It was nice knowing that for a small amount of time, you were concerned about being the (top) No. 1 seed."

Interestingly, LSU and Tennessee will start the tournament on the Lady Vols' court in Knoxville, which could make that site a hot ticket. LSU is the top seed in the Chattanooga Regional, while Tennessee was placed in the Philadelphia Regional.

Michigan State is No. 1 in the Kansas City Regional. North Caro-

lina heads the bracket for the Tempe Regional.

The women's tournament scrapped the East, Mideast, Midwest and West designations in favor of the city hosting the regional semifinals and finals.

Of course, there could be a North Pole Regional and Michigan State would be excited. This is the first No. 1 seed for the Spartans, who shared the Big Ten title with Ohio State and won the conference tournament. They haven't played in a week and are eager to get started.

"These kids are grumpy and tired of sitting around," Michigan State coach Joanne P. McCallie said. "They're ready to play. It doesn't matter who else is in the bracket."

The bracket actually is downright tough. Stanford is the No. 2 seed, Connecticut is seeded third and Kansas State is the No. 4 seed. Connecticut, winner of the last three national championships, won the Big East tourna-

ment this year. Kansas State was the Big 12 tournament runnerup.

Michigan State is the only No. 1 seed that plays on Saturday, facing Alcorn State in Minneapolis. The three others play on Sunday — Tennessee vs. Western Carolina, LSU vs. Stetson and North Carolina vs. Coppin State.

Before this year, Michigan State's highest seed had been No. 4 and that was back in 1991.

"I really wondered how they'd weigh what we've done this year against the tradition that we don't have in this program, compared to some other schools," McCallie said. "If you look at what we did this year, it's a hands-down case. If you look at it in terms of tradition, it gets a little murky."

In the end, however, it cleared right up.

"There are times that's there's just not very much that separates teams," said Parkes, the associate athletic director at Memphis. "But we have to come to a decision and our decision was that North Carolina and Michigan State were the (final) No. 1 seeds."

Johnson outtrains Busch brothers in Vegas

Hendrick driver stops Roush run with UAW-DaimlerChrysler 400 win

BY JENNA FRYER

The Associated Press

LAS VEGAS — Three races this season, three battles between Hendrick Motorsports and Roush Racing.

Give Hendrick the edge, two victories to one after Jimmie Johnson stopped the Roush stranglehold at Las Vegas Motor Speedway by winning the UAW-DaimlerChrysler 400 on Sunday.

But Roush came out a little cleaner after Johnson and runner-up Kyle Busch, another Hendrick driver, both failed post-race inspection. The roof on Johnson's Chevrolet was too low, and the rear quarter panel on Busch's car was too high.

There were no immediate penalties announced, but NASCAR

could elect to dock points from both drivers. So would cost Johnson the 15-point lead he has over reigning Nextel Cup champion Kurt Busch.

But Johnson isn't points racing, yet, focusing instead on spending the \$30,000 bonus he earned for taking over the points lead.

"I can have a little fun at the blackjack table," Johnson said. "But I'm not concerned about the points lead yet."

Johnson, who won for the 15th time in his career, has victories in five of the last nine races, dating to last season. He hasn't finished worse than sixth since October, and this victory put him right

back where he spent most of last season — on top of the points.

This latest victory helped Hendrick Motorsports claim a piece of the track in the desert

that Roush Racing has dominated with five victories in the first seven races.

But Johnson and Hendrick teammates Kyle Busch finishing second and Jeff Gordon fourth, the Roush dominance is over. Kurt Busch carried the Roush flag with a third-place finish.

Hendrick now has two wins this season — Gordon won the season-opener at Daytona — and Roush has one with Greg Biffle winning at California.

"It's going to be a fun battle all the way to the end," Kurt Busch said. "You could say that Hendrick and Roush definitely have a distinct advantage over the other groups."

Johnson's win also ruined what could have been a banner day for the Busch brothers, Las Vegas natives.

As Johnson was driving his Chevrolet to Victory Lane, Kyle was treasuring his second-place finish.

"This is as good as a win as far as I'm concerned," he yelled to his crew. "I had a bunch of guys put money on me, so it would have been cool to have Jimmie pull over and let us win," said Kyle, who went off at 60-1 before the race. "But, hey, next year I'll probably have a lot lower odds."

Saunders returns to major-league mound

The Associated Press

Tony Saunders wasn't worried about the results. After he's been through, just throwing a few pitches off a major league mound was quite an accomplishment.

Trying an improbable comeback after twice breaking his left forearm while pitching, Saunders worked one inning for the Baltimore Orioles during their 5-3 victory over the St. Louis Cardinals in a split-squad game Sunday.

"I know it's one little insignificant inning in a game, but it felt good," said Saunders, who finally broke his arm on May 26, 1999, while pitching for Tampa Bay, was in camp on a minor league contract with an invitation to spring training.

Saunders allowed two runs, three hits and one walk in four innings at the first home run. Sammy Sosa hit his second homer for Baltimore, a towering shot to right.

Elsewhere, Randy Johnson, Derek Lowe and Mike Hampton all had outstanding outings.

At Kissimmee, Fla., Johnson made his second start with the New York Yankees, throwing four scoreless innings in an 8-2 victory over the Houston Astros, his former team.

"I think this was a good barometer for me because the biggest thing was that I was able to go from two innings to four innings without any problems," Johnson said. "By the time I felt like I was just getting my work done in my last start, I was done. I wasn't happy with everything I threw, but I felt like I was starting to settle in a little bit."

At Vero Beach, Fla., Lowe allowed one run and three hits in five innings, and the Los Angeles

Spring training

Dodgers got home runs from Jeff Kent and Norihiro Nakamura in a 7-2 victory over the Florida Marlins.

Lowe has started three games this spring, giving up only one run and seven hits in 12 innings.

"I'm probably like everyone else, two or three weeks away," he said. "I probably couldn't throw 100 or 110 pitches effectively right now. But with three more starts, I think I'll be ready."

At Jupiter, Fla., Hampton had his third straight strong start, allowing one hit in four innings for the Atlanta Braves, who lost 7-3 to a St. Louis Cardinals split squad. Always a good hitter, he even connected for a two-run homer off Mark Mulder.

Hampton allowed his first two runs in nine innings this spring, but only a fourth-inning homer by John Mabry was earned. Opposing hitters were a combined 1-for-16 against the left-hander in his first two spring outings.

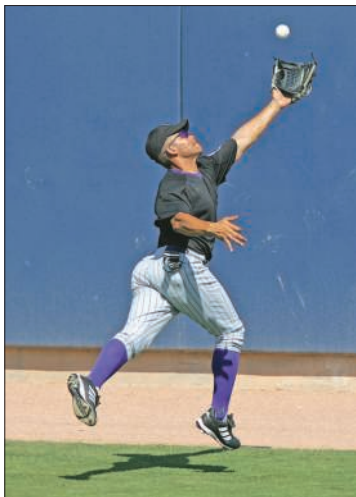
"I felt pretty good, not as sharp as the previous two outings," Hampton said. "On the whole it was a pretty good effort, not great. We're rebounding pretty good."

In other games:

Mets 7, Tigers 6: At Lakeland, Fla., Kris Benson had his second solid outing and Chris Woodward tripled twice, moving closer to earning a utility spot with New York. Luis Garcia homered off Detroit closer Troy Percival in the ninth to break a 6-6 tie.

Twins 4, Red Sox 2: At Fort Myers, Fla., Kyle Lohse threw three solid innings and Joe Mauer hit two home runs off Boston starter Matt Clement gave up three runs and seven hits in four innings.

Blue Jays 5, Devil Rays 0: At St. Petersburg, Fla., Dave Bush pitched two hit ball for four innings, and Alex Rios had two hits and scored three times. Tampa



Arizona Diamondbacks center fielder Jose Cruz Jr. robs Milwaukee Brewers' Lyle Overbay of a hit during the third inning of an exhibition game Sunday at the Brewers' spring training facility in Phoenix.

Bay starter Rob Bell threw three hitless innings.

Indians 10, Reds 1: At Sarasota, Fla., Scott Elarton allowed only two singles in four scoreless innings. Elarton, the Indians' No. 5 starter, has allowed just one run in three starts spanning nine innings this spring. Ken Griffey Jr. made his third appearance as a designated hitter for Cincinnati and singled in four plate appearances.

Mariners 7, Rangers 6: At Surprise, Ariz., Alfonso Soriano homered to snap an 0-for-17 start this spring and Richard Hidalgo hit a pair of two-run shots for Texas.

Seattle's Luis Ibanez finished 2-for-3 to raise his spring training average to .519 (14-for-27).

Royals 3, Giants 3 (10): At Scottsdale, Ariz., Aaron Guile, Emil Brown and Ruben Gotay hit consecutive home runs in the fourth inning for Kansas City.

Harrington earns first victory on PGA Tour

The Associated Press

PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla. — As Padraig Harrington mounted a charge in the Honda Classic, birds came so easily he began thinking about shooting 59.

He settled for his first PGA Tour win instead.

Harrington won when Vijay Singh missed a 2½-foot putt to bogey the second playoff hole Sunday.

"I'm ranked eighth in the world, the Dublin native is believed to be the first player from the Republic of Ireland to win a tour event.

He figured his countrymen watched on TV.

"I'm sure I kept a few pups open tonight," Harrington said. "It's very good to be the first Irishman. We have produced a lot of competitive players."

An assistant to Irish President Mary McAleese phoned with congratulations. Harrington caught a break with Singh's miss, but he earned the title by shooting a 9-under-par 63 in the final round.

Down seven shots when the day began, Harrington birdied 10 of the first 13 holes and briefly took sole possession of the lead.

"I had not looked at a leader board," he said. "I was just thinking about shooting 59... I'm thinking, I'm 10 under. It's there. How much more work do you have to do?"

When consecutive bogeys ended his bid to tie the PGA Tour record, Harrington began to focus on winning the tournament. He was in a four-way tie for the lead when he finished nearly 90 minutes ahead of the last group, and earned a playoff with Singh and Joe Ogilvie when all three finished at 14-under 74.

The par-4 No. 18 was used for both playoff holes, and Harrington scrambled to get up-and-down for par each time. Ogilvie was eliminated when he bogeyed the first extra hole, and Singh uncharacteristically failed on the verge of victory.

He missed a 15-foot birdie try on the first playoff hole that would have given him the win. After Harrington made a 4-foot putt to par the second extra hole, Singh pushed his par try and the ball rimmed out.

"I thought it was a gimme," Harrington said. "If I had done it, I would be distraught, but thankfully Vijay has won enough that he shouldn't let it get to him."

Smyth wins SBC Classic

SANTA CLARITA, Calif. — Ireland's Des Smyth won his first Champions Tour title, closing with a 4-under 68 for a one-stroke victory over D.A. Weir and Mark McNulty in the SBC Classic.

Smyth finished with a 5-under 211 total on the Valencia Country Club course. McNulty shot a 74, and Weirling had a 72.

Golf roundup

SPORTS

Seeds of contention



Johnson ends Roush stranglehold in Vegas,
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Top: Illinois' Deron Williams directs his teammates during the championship game of the Big Ten tournament Sunday. Illinois got the top seed in the Chicago region. **Above left:** Oklahoma State's Terrence Crawford celebrates the Cowboys' Big 12 Tournament victory. The Big 12 got six NCAA berths. **Center:** Florida's Matt Walsh reacts near the end of a 70-53 rout of Kentucky in the SEC Tournament championship. **Above right:** Duke's Shavlik Randolph and the Blue Devils earned a No. 1 seed by beating Georgia Tech in the ACC tournament final.

AP PHOTOS

Late upsets help throw NCAA tournament selections into chaos

BY MICHAEL MAROT
The Associated Press

INDIANAPOLIS — The NCAA selection committee expected to struggle in seeding this year's 65-team tournament field. Every weekend upset made the task even more daunting.

With a record number of schools topping 20 wins, a rash of surprise finishes and a continually changing picture, nothing was decided easily. Not even choosing the top four seeds — Illinois, North Carolina, Duke and Washington.

The 10 committee members debated into the final hour Sunday about how the brackets should look, and finally settled on making Washington a No. 1 seed.

"You want to make sure you get it right on Line 1 but you also want to get it right on Lines 2, 3 and 4," selection committee chairman Bob Bowlsby said. "If you don't, then the fairness of the tournament is then really called into question."

Bowlsby's fifth year on the committee might have been his toughest.

He acknowledged teams such as Kansas and Gonzaga



■ Illinois gets closest thing to home-court advantage, Page 31

■ Formidable foursome top Syracuse regional, Page 30

■ Austin sets up Duke, Kentucky final, Page 29

may have deserved better than a No. 3 seed. Others, like Maryland and Buffalo, maybe could complain they should have been included.

Then there was Bowlsby's own school — he is the athletic director at Iowa — which leapfrogged Indiana into the

tournament even though the Hoosiers won three more Big Ten games.

"And yet it was the late-game results that created the most chaos."

"It was a big headache," Bowlsby said. "We had about five or six different scenarios that involved about four teams and a lot of them were either-or type situations."

The top three seeds — Illinois (32-1) in the Chicago region, North Carolina (27-4) in Syracuse, N.Y., and Duke (25-5) in Austin, Texas — were no surprise.

The Illini won the Big Ten regular season and then the tournament title and were ranked No. 1 most of the season.

The Tar Heels and Blue Devils split the regular-season and tournament titles in the Atlantic Coast Conference, which had the nation's highest conference RPI.

But Washington (27-5), which ranked No. 14 last week, took the No. 1 seed in Albuquerque. Many thought that spot could have gone to a third ACC school, Wake Forest; Southeastern Conference regular-season champ Kentucky (25-5); or sixth-ranked Louisville (29-4), which won

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No. 1 Stanford doesn't get top women's seed Page 33

